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Balance of Power in Central and Southwest Asia



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Balance of Power in Central and Southwest Asia

Conference Papers

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**Defense Academic Research Support Program
August 1992**

Preface

These papers were prepared for a conference entitled "Balance of Power in Central and Southwest Asia" sponsored by the Defense Academic Research Support Program (DARSP) and held at the United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) Headquarters in Tampa, Florida, 26-27 February 1992. This conference was the fourth major event sponsored by DARSP at USCENTCOM.

Our objective was to bring together scholars and analysts to share ideas and perspectives on critical aspects of changing regional relationships in Central and Southwest Asia in the wake of both the end of the Gulf War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Particular attention was given to the implications of the collapse of the Soviet empire for policies of the newly emerging independent states of Central Asia. The first day was devoted to political, economic, military, and strategic issues confronting Iraq and Iran. The second day dealt with internal developments in, and intra-regional relations between, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Turkey and the emerging Central Asian Republics. Reference was also made to the activities of Saudi Arabia in Central Asia.

The result was two days of intensive discussions which placed the problems of the region in a new light. Inevitably, the discussion went well beyond the confines of these papers, nevertheless, this compendium captures a number of important

perspectives on political, economic, and security trends in Central and Southwest Asia.

The views contained in this document are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as necessarily representing the official policy, either expressed or implied, of the Defense Intelligence College, the Department of Defense, or the US Government.

Rendering foreign names and words into English is always a problem. Although we have tried to be consistent within this document, similar words may be spelled differently in English simply because the language of origin is different. For example, Husain from Arabic is the same word as Husein from Persian, even though the spelling is different. Similarly, Muhammad from Arabic and Mohammed from Persian are the same name. We have attempted to keep the transliterations preferred by the authors, occasionally making slight changes simply to establish consistency between papers.

The Defense Academic Research Support Program (DARSP), initiated in 1982, provides a vehicle for direct contact and scholarly exchange between defense analysts and noted experts on the Third World. DARSP is managed by the Research Center of the Defense Intelligence College, a professional, accredited, degree-granting institution. DARSP concentrates exclusively on the Third World and supports only unclassified research.

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The administrative assistance of CWO2 Penny Wagner, US Navy, was critical to the success of the proceedings. Mr. Ed Valentine, Defense Intelligence Agency Representative at *USCENTCOM*, was also instrumental in providing administrative assistance and substantive advice as the conference was being organized. They and many others on staff provided indispensable support.

Thanks must also go to members of the Defense Intelligence College staff. Mr. Steven R. Dorr, Dr. Max L. Gross, and Dr. Robert O. Slater worked with Mr. Valentine and others at *USCENTCOM* and at the Defense Intelligence Agency to develop the conference agenda. Ms. Patricia E. Lanzara provided exemplary administrative assistance, and Lieutenant Neysa M. Slater, US Navy, provided exceptionally valuable copy editing and desktop publishing support. Without all their efforts, this volume could not have appeared.

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Changing Configurations of Power in Greater Central Asia: The Regional Context of Contemporary Afghanistan

Robert L. Canfield

Washington University in St. Louis

Preliminaries

Central, Southwest, and South Asia, or Greater Central Asia, seems to be in a period of restructuring. Defining the emerging political situation and estimating its consequences for the future are of course difficult tasks when we view affairs merely as a series of disparate events. If we had the benefit of a longer view, we might see more clearly a broader pattern and a trajectory of change; we might understand the conditions that are giving events their particular form and possibly see a direction in them. At the moment, we must grope for understanding. This article ventures a mere tentative and provisional interpretation of events in the region and suggests a possible trajectory of change over the next few decades.

Structural change is impelled by influences not always obvious, indexed in events which collectively reveal a new turn in relationships. "Political events," says Lattimore¹, "are only the surface phenomena of history. The forces that create them lie deeper, and these forces derive from the interaction of society and environment." Historians like Lattimore, looking back over a long period, have sometimes presumed to see "deeper forces" that have shaped the course of events. Braudel thought he had detected such forces at work in Spain in the sixteenth century. At that time, as he put it, a "powerful pendulum" was carrying that country "to its transatlantic destiny." There was, he said, a "physics" of Spanish policy operated upon the statesmen of Spain: "[D]espite their illusions," he

said, they were "more acted upon than actors." If we are to identify a trajectory of change in Greater Central Asia in our time, we must look for the "physics" of policy changes, the "deep forces," the swinging "pendulums" which act upon people by changing the contexts within which they set policies, make decisions, and attempt to carry them out.

Identifying "deep forces" requires the privileging of information, the featuring of particular events or details that seem diagnostic or determinative. This paper focuses on the technologies of transport and communications. These technologies have influenced social and political affairs in similar ways, as they are means of overcoming the social barrier of distance. "Distance," said Braudel, "is the first enemy;" the technologies of transportation and communications are the devices by which humans have been able to subdue it.

In this sense, these technologies intersect where society and environment interact and so influence affairs at a profound level, where, as Lattimore saw it, "deep forces" shape the course of events. These technologies are cumulative, as each innovation builds upon previous ones, and so they have given to history a directional aspect. As the technologies of transport and communications have improved the human ability to move goods or information in larger amounts, faster speeds, or to more places or people at cheaper cost, they have also changed the possibilities for human interaction in ways which make the past irretrievable, opening up new possibilities for the future.

This paper notes the particular way these technologies have affected and are likely to affect political affairs in Greater Central Asia. Indeed, my point is that as certain innovations in transportation and communications have shaped the economic and

political affairs of the region in the past, we may reasonably surmise that other innovations in the means of transport and communications will, as they come into use, affect the course of affairs in the future. The task, as we consider the direction of developments in our time, will be to consider what those affects might be.

A great deal must remain beyond the horizon in this analysis. The possible social impact of the rapid growth of population in this region, the declining average age, or the declining quality of life is not discussed. Nothing is mentioned about the disastrous environmental and health problems, the abundance of modern weaponry in certain areas, or the growing economic and political influence of the narcotics industry. Instead, the transport and communications facilities that gave Central Asia its varied political configurations in the past, leading up to the present time when further developments seem to be in process, will be in the foreground. We will thus examine Greater Central Asia as a region in transition, in which major developments in transportation and communications have marked historic turns in social and political conditions in the past and will surely affect those conditions in the future.

Characteristic Geopolitical Patterns in the Past

The periods in Central Asian history can be identified in terms of the innovations in transport or communications facilities that set the contexts for social alignments and political behavior. At certain times, a particular change in the technology of transport or communications changed the possibilities for political and social action and so affected the course of affairs. The summary of the history presented here serves to explain the utility of focusing on these technologies and leads into the next section, which examines certain transport and communications innovations recently or soon to be introduced into this region. The possible affects on political affairs in the future will be considerable.

The Rise of European Imperial Power and the Division of Central Asia. Before the rise of maritime trade in the sixteenth century, Greater Central Asia was the locus of heavily travelled overland routes between the denser population centers of Asia. The spices and silks which passed

through this area, many on the way to European markets, brought wealth and influence to the Central Asians. But the locational advantage of this region was disturbed after the armies of Timur (Tamerlane) devastated a wide swath of the Middle East and India in the fourteenth century. Its central location was lost completely after the sixteenth century, when the Europeans found a way to circumvent Central Asia and the Middle East by sailing around Africa to make more direct contact with the spice and silk producing areas. Europeans, eventually aided by an improved compass and the chronometer, became capable of making the long voyages with increasing safety, and they learned to use shipborne canonry to intimidate the peoples of the Asiatic coastlands.³ The effect on the once-busy highways and entrepôts of Greater Central Asia was a precipitous economic decline. As long-distance trade withered, the Central Asian rulerships weakened.

Asia was in this same period undergoing new pressures from the west and north, for the Muscovite Czars were expanding their influence from their heartland west of the Urals into the inland territories of Asia. Impelled by restiveness on their frontiers, they pressed their imperial interests eastward and southward: by the end of the sixteenth century, the Russians had crossed the Urals into Siberia and established outposts beyond the Ob River; by 1647 they had a community at Okhotsk; within a half-century they had reached Kamchatka and the Pacific. Beginning in the eighteenth century and continuing into the nineteenth, they pushed southward from Siberia into the Kazakh steppes and thence into the drainage basins of the Oxus and the Syr rivers, the region now called "Central Asia." They subjected the Lesser and Middle Kazakh Hordes by 1740, all of Kazakhstan by 1855, and all the land to the Oxus River by 1900.⁴

In the mean time, the British had become the preeminent sea-based imperial presence in South and Southwest Asia. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, they expanded their imperial control further inland, pressing northward along the Indo-Gangetic plain. They arrived at the foothills of the Hindu Kush mountains in Central Asia at about the time the Russians were advancing into the region on the north side of the Hindu Kush. The two empires discovered each other's advances into the area with alarm. Their rivalry over the intermediate

territory between their respective imperial domains gave Central Asia its modern identity as a boundary zone. These two powers pulled the interior of Asia into two main sectors.

In between, lay a swath of territory outside the direct control of both. It was a zone of vulnerability and special concern for the two empires. The British feared incursions through it like the countless invasions which had overrun India for millennia, and the Russians had never forgotten the devastating Mongolian invasions that had originated in Central Asia. Toward the end of the last century, the nation-state of Afghanistan took form in the intermediate zone with the aid of the two empires. The country became the locale of anxious counter-political activity by its two imperious neighbors. The rivalry eventually forced an accommodation as the two sides wearied of their "Great Game," and in 1907 they agreed on a definition of their respective spheres of interest in the interior of Asia, excluding both from the internal affairs of Afghanistan. It in effect became an underdeveloped zone separating their respective domains.

The Period of Railroad Imperialism. This geopolitical configuration was reinforced by rails of steel, for in the second half of the nineteenth century, it was believed by both sides that "railways, rather than warships and mass armies, would decide the fate of India, and ultimately of Asia and Africa."⁵ Both powers invested heavily in the new technology.

The British were first. Between 1853 and 1869 they installed 4,000 miles of track in India. Rail became "the bloodstream of the Raj," bringing India's huge inland territories into easy range of the maritime ports. The Northwest Frontier, India's gateway to Central Asia, instead of being three months away from Calcutta by road and barge, became only three days away by rail (it is now two days).⁶

The Russians introduced railroads somewhat later but eventually were laying track at unprecedented speed. They completed the Transcaspian Railway in 1888, extending it east of the Caspian to Merv (Mary) and Kushka in 1900, and further east to Tashkent and Orenburg by 1904. The Trans-Siberian Railway was completed in 1904, and by 1916 they had extended railhead to Termez on

the Afghanistan border. The effect was a dramatic extension of their reach. Ispahani noted that the "primitive logistics" of the Russian-controlled region were immediately upgraded by a transport system that enabled the khanates of the region to be directly linked to the Russian heartland.⁷ These railways brought the Central Asian marches of the Russian empire into easy reach of their heartland; for the British, on the other hand, they were a threat to India.

As Afghanistan was the natural locus of confrontation between the two powers, the British used every means possible to ensure that country would remain underdeveloped. Britain wanted Afghanistan "to be inaccessible and impermeable, denying the possibility of swift, surprise movements across its frontier." In the words of a British policy statement, "A war on the North-West Frontier would be chiefly a problem of transport and supply. We must therefore allow nothing to be done to facilitate transport." The Russians saw Afghanistan as the crucial route of access into the Subcontinent, and in the final years of the nineteenth century made several proposals for the construction of railroads connecting Central Asia to India's northwest frontier. One proposed link between Paris and Calcutta via Orenberg, Tashkent, Balkh, and Peshawar was rejected by the British (although they acknowledged it to be "economically sound") because of "past history" and the "prejudices of the two countries."⁸

This strategic game entailed considerations for the further advance of rail that were not realized, at least not then. In particular, the Russians had hoped for a north-south Trans-Persian railway connecting their lands to the Indian Ocean. Such a line would have transformed Bandar Abbas, in the words of a Russian author, into a "Russian Vladivostok in the Persian Gulf," or, in the words of a worried British historian, "a second Port Arthur."⁹ This line (at least part of it, the Trans-Iranian Railway between Bandar Shapur and Julfa), would eventually be built after World War I. It was in place in time to serve a purpose for which no one had dreamed: carrying lend-lease supplies to the Red Army during World War II.

Communications Innovations and the Rise of Populist Movements in the Nineteenth Century. The technologies of transport on the high seas

allowed Europeans to gain access to Asia directly in the sixteenth century, leaving the Central Asian corridors high and dry. The rail arteries by which the Russian and British empires consolidated their domains after the mid-nineteenth century pulled the northern and southern sectors of Central Asia into different imperial orbits. Another set of technological innovations were introduced over a period of decades beginning in the 1850s, opening up new possibilities for political activity. These devices included the telegraph and (later) the telephone, transmitting information faster than people or goods could travel. The printing press and (later) the radio disseminated information to masses of people. As these came into greater use, information became an increasing factor in public affairs, because it became possible for people (at least people with means) to have almost immediate access to each other despite great distances, and for larger numbers of people to be given information quickly. Through these devices, people could maintain contact with each other, become aware of opinions, and, in other respects, develop shared interests and work in common cause.

Through the introduction of these new means of transmitting and disseminating information, after about 1880, populations all over Asia began to coordinate and organize activities which became a growing problem to the established empires. Various peoples in the Middle East, Central Asia, and elsewhere in Asia began to agitate for such social innovations as free press, independent local governments, use of local languages rather than imperial languages, and broadening of education to the masses. These groups were motivated by different concerns and often disputed among themselves, but they were alike in benefitting from access to the new technologies of communication.

The consequence was a major assault on the rulerships of Eurasia. In many parts of Central, South, and western Asia, people became politically active. In the Arabic-speaking regions of the Ottoman Empire, secret societies began to push for independence, and in Ottoman Turkey itself, Muslim progressives eventually forced the Sultan to resign. In Russia, in Baku, on the Kazakh steppes, and in the Orenburg, pan-Islamic political parties were founded. In Persia, Muslim progressives, in order to impose rule of law instead of the monarchy, forced the Shah to grant a constitution. For a time

early in this century, imperial regimes made concerted efforts to quench these groups, but by the end of World War I, the Ottoman and Russian empires were buckling, and powerful new social currents were again in motion. In the southern sector of Greater Central Asia, progressive elites began to transform the structures of power: in Turkey, to found a secular state in place of the Ottomans; in Persia, to institute a new series of reforms; in Afghanistan, which had missed the maelstroms of the period, to try (unsuccessfully) to reshape the country; in India, to mobilize the masses against the British Raj.

By 1917 in the northern sector of Greater Central Asia, as the Russian empire crumbled into a plethora of local uprisings, various elements moved for autonomy in the Caucasus, Transcaspia, the Kazakh steppe region, Kokand, and northern Turkestan. As the Bolsheviks gained ground against their rivals in Russia, they decided to assert control over the Muslim populations of "Russian" Central Asia. They were fortunate to receive aid from a number of bored and ill-fed Austro-Hungarians in Tashkent who volunteered to serve in the Red Guards,¹⁰ and soon after the October Revolution, the Bolsheviks were able to regain control over the southern portion of Turkestan. It seems worth noting, for our purposes, that a vital element in their ability to reintegrate the region was their grip on the rail system: "they were the only force ... capable of maintaining, repairing, and using the railway network for their own military aims."¹¹ The Czarist-built rail system became a crucial resource for the reconstitution of a new empire.

The Russian imperial system was replaced by a populist movement able to grasp the instruments of administrative control and use them to establish a new political order. In the period after World War I, as new devices of communications became ever more important tools of government and leadership (for example, the loud speaker, used in Germany with great effect by Hitler, and the radio, used in the United States by Roosevelt and later in Britain by Churchill), the Communists ensconced in Moscow sought to control information among the Soviet masses, matching their plans to develop a centrally controlled economy with similar measures to control information from the center. It was in the wake of the German collapse at the end of World War II, as the Soviets were absorbing large sections

of Eastern Europe, that Churchill dubbed the information barrier surrounding the Soviet bloc nations the "Iron Curtain."

After World War II the configuration of power in Greater Central Asia was similar to that which had existed for over a century, only the imperial powers had new faces. In the north, the Soviet Union and its tributary states replaced imperial Russia, whereas in the south, the territories of the British empire were now held by the successor states of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Ceylon. The United States, out of concern about potential Soviet adventures in the Gulf, took up the regional concerns of the British. To secure a strong fence along the Soviet Union's southern flank, the United States made several attempts to form an alliance, a "northern tier," among the southwest Asian nations, investing most heavily in Iran so that it could serve as a formidable bastion against any Soviet advances to the south. The Soviets, who took these moves as threatening, were of course strengthening their internal defenses, and in any case continued to control information within their domains. As the "cold war" intensified, they heightened their efforts to seal their populations from outside influences, not only censoring news but also jamming foreign broadcast frequencies, at one time nearly 60 percent of the air waves. Afghanistan continued to serve as a buffer state between the Soviet Union and the "northern tier" nations along its southern flank.

The Weakening of the North-South Boundary. Nevertheless, incremental changes were taking place in Greater Central Asia that would eventually undermine the conventional power alignment in the region. The transport and communications facilities of Greater Central Asia were gradually improved throughout the twentieth century. In Central Asia, the Soviets modernized the infrastructure as part of their growing investments in mineral and oil extraction industries. They added new rail lines, improved roads, introduced pipelines for the shipment of oil and coal (in slurry form), increased the number of navigable miles on the rivers, installed electric power lines, constructed airports. These activities drew the Central Asian Republics ever more tightly into the Soviet metropolis and made them less self-sufficient.¹²

In South Asia, the transport and communications infrastructures were also being improved. In Iran

after 1952, Muhammad Reza Shah sponsored a number of development projects, including massive investments in an improved highway and rail system. Plans for the railroad entailed the laying of 10,000 km of new tracks that would eventually connect to the railhead in neighboring countries such as Zahedan, which was already linked into Pakistan's railway system; Sarakhs in Turkmenia; and on the Indian Ocean at two points, Bandar Abbas and Chah Bahar. By the time of the Shah's demise in 1979, a new agreement had been signed to build a connecting railway system within Afghanistan.¹³

The improvement of the transport and communications infrastructure within Afghanistan in the period after World War II most dramatically marked the new possibilities for alignment of powers in Greater Central Asia. In the period from about 1955 to 1979, the government of Afghanistan, aided by the Americans, Soviets, and other European nations, was heavily involved in the construction of hydro-electric dams, large canals and irrigation systems, telegraph and telephone systems, an extensive system of paved highways, a national radio station, airports capable of servicing large commercial aircraft in the major cities, and, eventually, airstrips in the provincial capitals that could serve an internal airline company. Through this aggressive program of development, many of the dispersed and isolated localities of the country became much more accessible to each other and the central government. Indeed, the whole country became more accessible to neighboring countries and the outside world. With little notice, Soviet Central Asia and South Asia, which had formerly been separated by a zone of underdevelopment, were being joined together through technological improvements within Afghanistan and Iran. By the 1970s, a context for a major geopolitical restructuring was in place.

The Breach of the Afghanistan Barricade. The most notable events which exposed the new spatial structure in Greater Central Asia were, of course, the Iranian Revolution and the Soviet-Afghan War. The Iranian Revolution, one of the most significant political events of the twentieth century, marked the collapse of the "northern tier" policy, embarrassed the United States, and inspired Islamic activists all over the Muslim world. Due to concern about the

strength of the uprisings against a new Marxist regime in Kabul, the Soviets decided to intervene in Afghanistan. That decision turned out to be catastrophic, as the war that ensued broke down the Soviet side of the barricade.

As less has been said about this development, we shall dwell on it in more detail here. The Soviet military machine that moved into Afghanistan was considered awesome; their task would, it was thought, be finished in a few months, perhaps weeks. That the Afghan peoples were able to resist and harry this machine for a period of several years became a growing embarrassment. The Soviet image of irresistible power gradually tarnished as the war dragged on, draining Soviet resources and undermining public confidence in the leadership.

The Afghanistan War was an embarrassment that fractured an empire. Gholam Ali Ayeen has pointed out that empires characteristically have maintained control through intimidation and an appearance of invincibility.¹⁴ Embarrassing defeats weaken the strands by which empires are bonded, for they expose frailties in the system and embolden disaffected elements to express their frustrations openly, and in some cases to revolt. The Afghanistan War was the embarrassment which induced disaffected elements within the Soviet system to test the power and resolve of the central administration. Eastern Europeans, especially the Poles, were in fact watching the Afghanistan resistance with great interest in the early 1980s, and they took heart for their own causes. Thereafter, many influences worked together to undermine the integrity of the Soviet Union.

Moreover, the Afghanistan War broke down the Soviet system of information control. Frustration and disenchantment grew among the Soviet peoples as increasing numbers of dead soldiers were brought back from the war, and the surviving veterans returned with stories differing markedly from official reports. Also, by the mid-1980s Afghan resistance groups were injecting their own propaganda among the Muslim peoples of Central Asia by means of cassette tapes and tracts. These informal sources of uncensored information opened a rift in the Iron Curtain. Gorbachev's glasnost policy was obliged to a large extent by the rising flow of uncontrolled information associated with the Afghanistan War. As the Soviets withdrew their troops in 1988 and 1989, they also introduced

radical changes inside the Soviet Union: censorship eased, and the jamming of foreign broadcasts ceased. The Soviet peoples for the first time under Soviet rule had relatively free access to outside and inside news. The Soviet-Afghan War embarrassed the Soviets and helped to tear open the Iron Curtain.

The Emerging Conditions in Greater Central Asia

At this writing, further evidence of the collapse of the boundary between the northern and southern portions of Greater Central Asia is appearing. Political and commercial ties are being developed among various nation-states across this divide, surely to be followed by further investments in infrastructures that will bridge the zone of separation. The relation of Central Asia to the rest of the world will surely be changed as the region becomes more accessible and more capable of being, as it once was, a corridor of traffic between the population centers of Eurasia.

This section will summarize some of the plans and political developments already in motion which will affect this transition, noting communications technologies being introduced in the region which will surely affect popular consciousness in ways that could reshape social and political affairs in the area.

The Connection Between North and South. Events in Iran and Afghanistan since about 1978 have deflected these governments away from development programs, but some improvements have taken place anyway and more are being planned. Moreover, now the disappearance of the Soviet Union has opened up opportunities for new ties to be formed among the nations of the region, and these will be materially evidenced in improved systems of transport and communications in the region.

Indeed, the nineteenth century vision of a network of rail lines connecting Europe, India, and the Russian "heartland" is about to become a reality, for Iran is making plans to lay the tracks that will be the final links in the system. In May 1990, Iran inaugurated a project to build a rail line between Bafq and Bandar Abbas, a new rail connection to the Indian Ocean. And in 1991, Pakistan and Iran agreed to improve and expand their highway and railroad interconnections; when these are completed,

Pakistan will enjoy direct rail access to the Middle East and Europe, and Iran will have direct access to South Asia. Indeed, the agreement was made in the context of a more general agenda, expressed by Pakistan's President, which was to foster closer cooperation of these two nations with the new republics of Central Asia.

These moves are being made as a growing number of business interests and governments in the wider world are examining possibilities for investment and development in the Central Asian republics. The leaders of several nations in South and western Asia have been vying to establish profitable ties to the newly formed successor states of the Soviet Empire. As those bonds are established, they will become materially evident in improved transport systems in the region, some of which will reach across the divide between North and South Asia. Turkey has offered the republics of Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenia, and Kazakhstan help in financing and construction of new transport linkages to Turkey and the West, representing their country as a modern state, an image that should play well in the Turkish-speaking successor states. The Saudi Arabians have established banks in the region and are supporting Islamic institutions. The Iranians are introducing textile mills and rebuilding mosques and madrasas. Iran also plans to make Tashkent the hub of a new airline network in Central Asia, institute development projects in Azerbaijan and Turkmenia, and install direct telephone connections and open a consular office in Tajikistan. Even President Najibullah of Afghanistan has made overtures to the successor states in Central Asia, not to offer help, of course, but to obtain it. Pakistan as early as 1990 was arranging with Uzbekistan to facilitate religious publication, train students, and exchange Islamic scholars through its International Islamic University in Islamabad.¹⁵

One of the most striking indications that the former north-south divide is being bridged is Pakistan's new policy toward Afghanistan. Pakistan is trying to persuade its Afghan clients, who have been the most intransigent among the mujahedin resistance groups, to come to terms with the Kabul regime. Nawaz Sharif's administration has even begun to distance itself from the Islamists within the country, who were once a vital base of his support. Pakistan has moved in this direction in order to develop ties to the Central Asian republics, whose leaders are

essentially secularists and regard Islamism as potentially disruptive and destabilizing; they will not tolerate an Islamist regime in Kabul. Pakistan is also reshaping its image to have a more moderate Muslim appearance, more like Turkey than Saudi Arabia, and Sunni like the Central Asians rather than Shia like the Iranians. Pakistan's interest in the Central Asian republics will be reflected in an improved infrastructure not only in highways and aircraft facilities but, most remarkably, in railroads.

Pakistan's change in policy expresses how definitely the configuration of strategic options has changed. To survive, Pakistan must tie its economic future to Central Asia. The republics, for their part, are interested in access to the international commercial system, which Pakistan can provide. The development of air, highway, and rail connections between the Central Asian republics and Pakistan would seem to be in the interest of all parties.¹⁶

Such are the plans for development in Greater Central Asia. There are also plans for infrastructural development elsewhere in Asia that will connect into the transport facilities of the region. In the distant future, the Tumen River basin development project in Korea and China, which will create a kind of Rotterdam on the Pacific, promises to increase substantially the overland traffic between the Far East and other parts of Eurasia, much of which must pass through Central Asia. Already the railroads of the Central Asian republics at this time are carrying goods between the Far East and South Asia: Japan has become Pakistan's largest trading partner, and some of the shipments between the two countries pass through Central Asia, despite the conflict in Afghanistan. The South Koreans are already a major source of high-tech investment in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, and their interests in the region will likely enlarge. All these emerging developments augur for a larger investment in the east-west rail arteries of Central Asia.

As new ties are formed between Pakistan and Iran; Turkey, the Caucasus, and the Central Asian republics; Pakistan and the Central Asian republics; and so on, Greater Central Asia will become a single economic trading region. It could gain an importance it has not enjoyed since the rise of maritime trade in the sixteenth century. Such a development may not be fully evident within my lifetime and thus must be discussed only

speculatively. But for the time being, it seems safe to say that the emerging political restructuring of the region will be manifested in, and further enhanced by, improvements in transport and communications facilities. In the emerging world, all vestiges of the once critical boundary between northern and southern Eurasia will vanish, as large capital investments in transport and communications facilities connect the parts of the region and bring them into more direct contact with each other and the wider world. South Asia, Europe, and China (regions where populations are large and dense) will have faster and cheaper means of access to each other by land through this intermediate zone. What was once a boundary will become a corridor.

The New Technologies of Cultural Transmission and Their Potential Impact on Popular Consciousness. Improvements in the transport and communications infrastructures of Central Asia constitute one set of technological innovations opening up new possibilities for political and social interaction in Greater Central Asia by bridging the historic north-south divide. Other innovations now, or soon to be, diffusing into the region are the new technologies of communications: television, computers, microchip telecommunications systems, cassette tapes, videos, copiers, and the like. These devices are transforming the ways information and other cultural materials can be managed and disseminated. They are creating new industries all over the world, new forms of enterprise, social relation, elites, and means of exerting influence. The long term affects of these devices on social and political affairs are as yet unclear anywhere in the world, although the affects already seem to be considerable.

Note the possible social and political affects of these new media on Greater Central Asia. The broadcast media, radio and television, which are becoming more widely available to the populations of Greater Central Asia, have been in use for some time, of course, but the programming now becoming available is relatively new and different. Since Soviet jamming of radio frequencies has ceased, the BBC, Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, and Radio Liberty are widely heard sources of news, as well as the "official" state radio broadcasts. Not only have more radio sources of information become available, but for the time being, many of those

sources appear to have become more reliable. Millions of people in this part of the world are becoming more aware of developments in the wider world through these less controlled broadcast media.

Radio is the important broadcast medium in the region now, but television is becoming more available. The privately owned AsiaSat I satellite recently put up by a Hong Kong firm has a footprint stretching from Afghanistan to Japan and a potential audience of 2.3 billion people. Its signal can be captured by anyone with a dish larger than 2.5 meters in diameter. Already the demand has escalated. The Gulf War generated a huge appetite for outside news, particularly CNN, and soon afterwards that appetite was replaced by a demand for more entertainment. CNN, the BBC's World Service Television, and other local channels based on AsiaSat I are already operating. Local entrepreneurs in India have begun to set up privately owned satellite dishes in order to sell cable television to their neighbors. Recently, when Secretary of State Baker visited the republics, virtually all Central Asian leaders wanted to know how to get access to CNN.

Radio and television are broadcast technologies that can reach large and dispersed audiences sharing a common language. Just as the advance of printing enabled elites to reach wide audiences and eventually help nationalities become self-aware and organize into powerful social movements, broadcasting technologies through their ability to reach ever larger audiences similarly affect the political processes in the peoples of Greater Central Asia. These media are effective in enabling scattered populations to become more aware of commonalities. The impact within the Central Asian republics, for instance, is likely to be more mutual awareness among the scattered Turkic peoples as well as the three Persian-speaking peoples in the region.

As television becomes more available, it will have powerful impact on public consciousness (tastes, ambitions, heroic images, etc.), especially as programming improves. So far, television programming has been government controlled and is almost universally boring. However, other sources of television programming are becoming available in South Asia (and will soon come on line in Central Asia as well), programming which has

been popular elsewhere, much of it produced in the West. The introduction of this kind of programming through television (projected, of course, in the stylized caricatures so effectively used by the mass media) will give a new shape to popular tastes and virtual images. Popular programming will shape people's images of the kind of life they want to have, the kind of leaders they like, the kind of political processes they prefer, and so on. (An example of the grip television has had on the imaginations of an isolated people in the Islamic world is the Tuareg, a tribal people in North Africa who control the north-south caravan trade over the Sahara, and are notable for their custom of veiling the men instead of the women. Recently the Tuareg delayed their annual migration for 10 days in order to see the last episode of *Dallas*.¹⁷)

Not everyone will accept Western programming; it will necessarily challenge and sometimes offend the sensibilities of some people in other cultures. One of the motivating impulses of the Islamic "fundamentalist" movements has been frustration over the growing influence of western culture on popular tastes in the Muslim world. "Television comes in for most of the blame," says Immanuel Sivan, "because it brings the modernist message in the most effective, audiovisual form into the very bastion of Islam -- family and home. But the same holds true for radio and for tape cassettes."¹⁸

Cassette recorders, along with videos and telephones, are "narrowcasting" devices. Although some of these devices are currently rare in some parts of Greater Central Asia, they will be diffused broadly in the region within a few years. Cassette tape recordings have already been an inexpensive means of distributing recorded sermons, lectures, recited poetry, and speeches, not to mention music. We have noted that they have been widely distrusted in Afghanistan and Central Asia. The content of such tapes is not limited to religious or political topics: cassette recordings of Michael Jackson are already popular in Central Asia.¹⁹ Videos, although less accessible in Central Asia itself, are well entrenched elsewhere in Eurasia, and cannot be but a few years from being standard fare all over Asia. The video industry is booming in India, for instance. You can buy not only videos produced locally, but also videos of films and television programs filched from satellite broadcasts. What has happened in India is a harbinger of what could take place all

across Eurasia: growing numbers of people will have access to more of the cultural products of the outside world.

The social and political consequences of the introduction of narrowcast technologies are hard to predict. Narrowcast technologies enable self-conscious and special interest groups to disseminate their ideas to targeted groups and communities. They can be effectively used to socialize new recruits and are already being used by the various Islamic interest groups, such as the Shia, the Ismailis, the Sufi orders, and other activist groups.²⁰

Broadcast and narrowcast technologies are potentially alike in one respect: they are likely to weaken loyalties to nation-states. Neither broadcasting nor narrowcasting technologies favor the interests of states. State boundaries that do not coincide with linguistic boundaries are easily bridged by broadcasting, and governments can no longer effectively jam broadcast signals as before; also, narrowcasting devices can easily be smuggled across state lines. In the emerging world, governments will likely be unable to control the flow of information as before. Nation-states may nevertheless find these devices a threat to their ability to manage their populations.

Conclusion

Just as certain transformations in the technology of transport and communications have in the past had a formative influence on the course of affairs in the history of Greater Central Asia, so, similarly, the introduction and improvement of transport and communications facilities now and in the near future will change possibilities for social behavior and political alignment. Changes in the configuration of social and political relations in Greater Central Asia seem inevitable, although the particular strategies and agendas people will develop using their new tools are, of course, unknowable.

We have focused on the changes in social and political relations that result in changes in the technologies of transport and communications. Cheaper shipping on the high seas in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, imperial railroad systems in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, electric and electronic communications devices in this century: these technologies have shaped the

configuration of politics in the past. It seems reasonable that the transport and communications resources now or soon to be coming into use will further transform the geopolitical configuration of Greater Central Asia.

It has become standard for social scientists to emphasize that people construct their worlds; the identities and adaptations of societies are fabrications and thus are subject to change and revision. Nevertheless, my point here has been, adapting a famous statement by Marx, that people do not construct their worlds as they please: they are instead constrained by conditions and resources available to them. The technologies examined, compounded one upon another, have progressively introduced new conditions and resources, opening up new possibilities for social action and political cooperation to successive generations. The consequences of these innovations for social and political affairs have been operative in the past and will continue to be so, as long as human beings seek to improve their tools for mitigating the social obstacle of distance. In this sense, each successive generation is "acted upon" in ways it rarely notices. Perhaps a historian in the future will see in retrospect what our generation can grasp only vaguely, that we also are as strongly "acted upon" as have been the generations of the past.

Endnotes

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1. Owen Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers of China* (Boston: Beacon, 1961 [1939]), 340.

2. Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II, Volume I* (New York: Harper, 1972 [1949]), 19.

3. Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), explains that the real change was less a matter of improved sea-going technology than of the aggressive orientation of the Europeans on the Indian Ocean, once they had reached the area. From the point of view of Central Asia, it was, in any case, a shift in the technology as well as the route of travel.

4. Geoffrey Wheeler, *History of Central Asia* (New York: Praeger, 1964); and O. Edmund Clubb, *China and Russia: The "Great Game"* (New York: Columbia University, 1971).

5. Milan Hauner, *What is Asia to Us? Russia's Asian Heartland Yesterday and Today* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990), 103.

6. Paul Theroux, forward, in *Railways of the Raj*, eds. Michael Satow and Ray Desmond (New York: New York University, 1980); and Michael Satow, "38,000 Miles of Track: India's Railway Lifeline," *National Geographic* 165 (6, 1984): 744-749.

7. Mahnaz Ispahani, *Roads and Rivals: The Political Uses of Access in the Borderlands of Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1989), 91.

8. Ispahani, 95.

9. Hauner, 103 and 105.

10. Hauner, 88.

11. Hauner, 88.

12. Victor Mote, "Afghanistan and the Transport Infrastructures of Turkestan," in *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union: Collision and Transformation*, eds. Milan Hauner and Robert L. Canfield (Boulder: Westview, 1989).

13. Hauner, 101-112.

14. Gholam Ali Ayeen, *Afghanistan wa Sarnawisht-i Imperaturiha! Aya Tarikh Tikrar Khahad Shud? [Afghanistan and the Destiny of Empires! Is History Repeating Itself?]*. *Mujahed Wollas* Volume 5, 1989.

15. These new alliances are not without their contradictions. Iran can cultivate the Azeris as Shia Muslims, but not as Turkic peoples. The Turkic-Persian divide within Iran is still sensitive. Afghanistan's Najibullah can cultivate the successor states of Central Asia, but that relationship could jeopardize his largely Pushtun coalition in Kabul; the Uzbek and Tajik peoples of the Central Asian states are culturally similar to the powerful anti-regime coalition in northern Afghanistan. For the leaders of the Central Asian republics, who are essentially secularists, the development of ties with Iran or Pakistan could invite problems with the Islamicist elements within those countries.

16. Apart from the attempts to develop ties by the government leaders in the nations of Greater Central Asia, there have been attempts by various other elements of the successor republics to develop ties with other societies on their own. Opposition groups in Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, for instance, as well as elsewhere have been looking for help from the outside. Also there are natural affinities for similar cultural groups on the opposite side of the boundary, and a growing interest in knowing their cultural compatriots. The Tajiks have a natural interest in the Persian-speakers in Iran and Afghanistan, where the old Persianate tradition persists in a less diluted form than in their homeland; and the Turkic peoples of Uzbekistan, Turkmenia, and Kyrgyzstan have a strong sense of cultural affiliation with the Turkic speaking peoples in those countries as well as Turkey.

17. John Naismith and Patricia Auburdene, *Megatrends 2000* (New York: Morrow, 1990).

18. Emmanuel Sivan, *Radical Islam: Medieval Theology and Modern Politics* (New Haven: Yale University, 1985), 3.

19. Mark Saroyan, *Waiting for the Islamic revolution in Soviet Central Asia*, First Annual Nava'i Lecture in Central Asian Studies at Georgetown University, 1991, 3.

20. David Edwards, "Summoning Muslims: Print, Politics, and Religious Ideology in Afghanistan," *Journal of Asian Studies* (Special issue, forthcoming).

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Threat or Threatened: Security in Iraq and Impact on Its Neighbors

Ahmed S. Hashim

Introduction

It is rare in international politics for a small country like Iraq, surrounded by powerful neighbors, suffering from acute vulnerabilities, and having emerged from a disastrous eight year war with horrendous casualties and a ruined economy, to have evolved into a major regional threat between 1988-1990. In the eyes of many, it is a threat to the peace, stability, and economic well-being of the globe after its assault on Kuwait in August 1990. Much of Iraq's "muscular" or belligerent foreign security policy and repressive internal policies since 1979 were a function of the ruling Baathist elite's perception of the regional and internal environments as being very dangerous and threatening.¹

Although Iraq emerged the victor in the Iran-Iraq War, its enhanced military power (the largest armed forces in the Middle East in terms of manpower and inventory, and the second most powerful country in the region after Israel) made it the focus of unwanted global attention and increased the fears of its neighbors without enhancing Iraqi security. Indeed, at the end of the war with Iran, not only had the range of Iraqi security policy concerns expanded with the growth of Iraqi power, but also its perception of vulnerability and threat.²

In grand strategic terms, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was designed to "solve" the country's geopolitical vulnerabilities, economic problems, force the West to deal with Iraq as a power in global affairs, and cement Iraq's emergence as undisputed Arab "superpower." Instead, Iraq miscalculated and emerged badly defeated: at no other time in its 25 year rule has the current regime faced such acute threats to the country's territorial integrity, internal stability, and regime survivability. Vulnerabilities

were enhanced without the requisite resources Iraq had enjoyed in the past.

One could also argue that the country's internal postwar policies have turned the state into a source of threat against its own people.³ This paper will examine the current security problem in Iraq, both in its internal and external dimensions. The central argument states that given Iraq's weakened power and unstable internal conditions, the country is more threatened than a threat to its neighbors.

War and Humiliation

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990 and its subsequent ejection from the emirate was a watershed event in Iraq's contemporary history. In the space of less than a year, Iraq went from being a regional superpower to a country with vastly diminished sovereignty over its affairs struggling for survival. After the end of the war with Iran, Iraq had a new set of problems with its neighbor. Kuwait exceeded its quota as set by OPEC guidelines, meaning a reduction of oil prices, which a cash needy country like Iraq could ill afford. Kuwait's refusal to cancel the billions of dollars worth of debt owed by Iraq incurred during the Iran-Iraq War irritated Iraq considerably. Iraq believed it had saved the weak Arab states from the Iranian menace, and the debt weighed heavily on Iraqi economic recovery. Iraq saw the alleged Kuwaiti theft of oil from the Rumailah oilfield straddling the Iraq-Kuwait border as an economic threat.⁴ Furthermore, Iraq also alleged that a conspiracy existed involving Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the United States to manipulate Iraq's economic woes in order to keep the country weak and preoccupied with internal affairs.

Iraq's action precipitated the first post-Cold War crisis and united almost the entire international community. In the United Nations Security Council,

the Western powers (US, Britain, and France) took the lead in opposing Iraq on the diplomatic front and helped push through Security Council Resolution 660 (SCR 660) condemning the Iraqi action. SCR 661 imposed wide-ranging sanctions prohibiting all UN members from buying Iraqi or Kuwaiti oil and from having any other trade, commercial, or financial dealings with them. SCR 665 authorized use of minimum force to enforce the trade embargo.

Activity was not limited to the diplomatic front. Saudi Arabia, which allegedly feared an Iraqi attack, requested and got US military aid which started arriving on 7 August 1990. This set the stage for a massive deployment of US forces to the region backed up by smaller contingents from Britain, France, Egypt, Syria, and other countries to form a formidable anti-Iraq international coalition. On 30 November 1990, this coalition was authorized by SCR 678 to use any means necessary (i.e., force) to eject Iraq from Kuwait on or after 15 January 1991.

As the crisis dragged on, the goals of the coalition were increasingly defined by the US. These included the defense of Saudi Arabia, the immediate, complete, and unconditional withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait, and the restoration of security and stability in the region. Attempts by some parties to reach a negotiated settlement got nowhere as a result of US insistence on unconditional Iraqi withdrawal, and equal Iraqi insistence that Kuwait was Iraqi territory and settlement of the Kuwait crisis had to be linked with resolution of other Middle East issues. As the crisis evolved further and coalition forces moved to an offensive posture, US aims articulated by President Bush expanded to include not only the forceful ejection of Iraq from Kuwait as mandated by the UN, but also destruction of Iraq's offensive and unconventional military capabilities, and overthrow of Iraqi President, Saddam Husain.

January 15, 1991 came and went without Iraq's withdrawal; 17 hours later, on 16 January 1991, a massive air campaign was launched against a wide variety of targets in Iraq and Kuwait. Six weeks of punishing air attacks were followed by a lightning 100-hour ground assault on 23 February 1991 which routed the Iraqi forces at surprisingly low cost to the coalition. On 27 February 1991, President Bush ordered a halt to the offensive which had liberated Kuwait and captured a large area of Iraqi territory bounded by Saudi Arabia to the south and Kuwait

to the east. On 3 March 1991, Iraq accepted coalition ceasefire terms which included rescinding the annexation of Kuwait and the immediate release of prisoners of war. A month later on 6 April 1991, Baghdad accepted the terms for a permanent ceasefire in accordance with SCR 687, which stipulated a continuation of the arms embargo for the indefinite future; UN-supervised destruction of all chemical and biological weapons, long-range ballistic missiles, and the nuclear infrastructure; Iraqi compensation for Kuwait and other countries for damage incurred during the war; an unequal demilitarized zone set up on the border with Kuwait extending ten kilometers into Iraq and five kilometers into Kuwait to be patrolled by UN observers; and UN demarcation of the border between the two countries. Iraqi compliance with these demands would result in a gradual lifting of sanctions. Iraq reacted with predictable outrage to SCR 687, which it saw as vindictive and unwarranted derogation of Iraqi sovereignty. Iraq, however, had no option but to accept the terms.

Degradation of Internal and Regime Security: Opposition and Rebellion

Baghdad also found itself opposed by an array of Iraqi opposition groups based outside the country and spanning the political spectrum of Islamic fundamentalists, Kurdish autonomists, nationalists, dissident Baathists, leftists, and liberals. Opposition to the regime was longstanding and had expanded considerably after 1979 when Saddam (then second in charge) edged out President Hasan al-Bakr and had himself "elected" to the Presidency. Iraq continued to be a well-policed and "self-policing" society where the populace had internalized "correct" patterns of conformity and norms of behavior. Iraqis put up with an authoritarian regime in return for socio-economic policies that were the most progressive in the Arab world. Iraqis became the most educated, healthiest, and best-fed Arabs.⁵ During the Iran-Iraq War, those who engaged in opposition were portrayed by the government not only as anti-regime but also as anti-Iraq and in cahoots with the enemy.

Severe weaknesses were exhibited by the opposition groups. First, many of the so-called parties were loose groups of exiles centered around an individual with a "party program" that consisted

of no more than a call for the overthrow of Saddam. Second, the opposition was fragmented and disunited: most were highly suspicious of one another's political programs. This in turn stemmed from widely disparate ideological viewpoints: how do you reconcile the secular and Islamic fundamentalist groups? Another complication is that many of the opposition groups are structured along ethno-sectarian lines (Kurd, Sunni, Shia) and thus subscribe to particular political programs which cater solely to the interests of their respective communities. Attempts to transcend particular party programs usually failed. Fourth, most of the world, except for neighboring Syria and Iran which were enemies of Iraq, ignored opposition to the regime to be on good terms with Iraq, an up and coming power which was a bulwark against Iranian "fanaticism" in the 1980s.⁶

The Gulf crisis of August 1990 saw a dramatic change in the fortunes of the opposition. Mobilization of the world against Saddam inspired the hope in the opposition that it would no longer be ignored by the international community. Consequently, opposition groups redoubled their efforts to establish a common anti-Saddam platform and also began courting member states of the coalition. A December 1990 conference in Damascus of virtually all the Iraqi opposition established a steering group, the Joint Action Committee, which condemned the "dictatorship" of Saddam and set itself the following objectives: topple the Saddam regime, form a provisional government which would found the basis for a constitutional system of government which would dismantle the apparatus of the Saddam regime, restore political liberties, abolish ethnic and sectarian discrimination, and hold free elections to elect a constituent assembly.⁷

Because many groups were averse to a military coup that would have merely replaced Saddam with a Baath party official or military officer, most hoped for a "popular uprising" to occur at a time when the regime would be facing a crisis characterized by loss of control over society and disarray in the military. None were prepared for the insurrections that erupted in the Shia south and Kurdish north following the end of the war.

The revolt in the south began when defeated and disgruntled infantry soldiers streamed back into Basra from the front, bringing with them harrowing

tales of defeat at the hands of a superior foe and mismanagement of the war by their own government. Attacks were launched against government installations including security, Baath party, and popular army buildings. Baath party cadre and security officials, most of whom were Shia, who did not flee or go into hiding were hunted down and murdered.

Within days, the revolt had spread to major cities including the holy Shia centers of Karbala, Najaf, Diwaniya, Al-Hilla, and Mahmudiya, where the most savage atrocities were committed by the rebels against regime officials. In Karbala alone, the government claimed that rebels had strung up 75 officials in makeshift gibbets. For several days, most of the major towns in the south remained in the hands of the rebels.

The rebellion profited immensely from the coalition military presence in a large area of Iraqi territory to the immediate south. This inhibited the Iraqi army from using the full panoply of what remained of its firepower. The coalition made it clear that Iraqi use of fixed-wing aircraft or chemical weapons against the insurgents would not be tolerated. Iran, despite disclaimers to the contrary, played an important role in the rebellion.⁸ Southern Iraq was infiltrated with ideologically committed and well-trained paramilitary units, including the tawwabin and badr divisions made up of Iraqi POWs from the Iran-Iraq War who had switched sides and fundamentalist exiles. These units belonged to the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI), the Shia Islamic fundamentalist umbrella group based in Tehran and headed by cleric Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim. Iran also reportedly infiltrated with *pasdaran* (Revolutionary Guards) units. At the end of the revolt, it was claimed that Iraq captured 6000 *pasdaran* infiltrators.⁹ These units were generally better armed, better motivated, and better organized than the initiators of the rebellion.

The government fought back with its best-trained and most loyal units, the Republican Guards, who made liberal use of firepower and helicopter gunships against towns where the rebels were holed up. Savage street to street fighting took place in the holy cities where the rebels opted to fight to the death.¹⁰ The military exacted a terrible revenge against the rebels and elements suspected of aiding them; a massive number of civilians caught up in the

crossfire fled into the inaccessible marshy region of southern Iraq, the coalition zone, and Iran. The tide turned in the government's favor when Basra and Karbala fell to government forces on 12 and 17 March 1991, respectively. The following day, Baghdad declared the rebellion over and accused a horde of "rancorous traitors" and foreign governments of having instigated it. Baghdad's announcement was premature because between 20-29 March 1991 the capital itself witnessed minor disturbances in the largely Shia quarters of Madinat al-Thawra, Shula, and Karrada al-Sharqiya, but these were contained very quickly by the regime's security forces.¹¹

Much has been written about the loyalties of the Iraqi Shia population during the war with Iran when they remained loyal. Expectations that the Shia would flock to Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic revolution were not borne out. Despite strident Iranian propaganda that they rise up, the mass of Shia remained quiescent because the state had the resources (economic largesse and security services) to ensure compliance during the war years.

The regime was merciless in rooting out militant organized Shia fundamentalist opposition and was able to establish a tight and effective security net over southern Iraq, to express dissent at a time of national emergency was virtual suicide for anybody. The Shia may have been satisfied with economic and political palliatives provided by the government especially in the early years of the war as it poured millions of dollars into economic development, provided generous benefits to survivors of soldiers killed in the war, and allowed cosmetic political participation.

Many analysts found it difficult to believe Saddam had succeeded in making the Shia "loyal" merely by institutionalizing twin policies of repression and bribes.¹² It was argued that the war had inculcated a solid sense of Iraqi national identity among the Shia, coupled with a belief that Iraqi Shiism should not be too readily identified with Iran. Iraqi Shia could not have failed to notice the Islamic regime's subsequent failures: political upheavals, executions, and the non-implementation of socioeconomic programs for the downtrodden in whose name the revolution was made. Above all, Iran's conduct during the war may have further alienated Iraqi Shia who saw Iran prolonging an "irrational" war which was killing Shia soldiers in the Iraqi army, and

because of the devastation of the south by Iranian artillery. If the Shia remained loyal between 1980-1988, why then did they rebel in the aftermath of the second Gulf War? Details about the *intifada*, as the uprising was called, are still sketchy and what follows are tentative observations.

First, there was a political and military vacuum in the south following the Iraqi defeat: the transportation and communications network had been devastated by coalition bombings, the remote border regions with Iran were not being watched, and the military and security services were in disarray. This vacuum was fully exploited by the rebels. Even during the most desperate years of the Iran-Iraq War when it seemed that the southern front might collapse, there was no political or military vacuum. The army retained its cohesion, and the Baath party continued to exercise tight control.

Second, the social contract between the populace and the government, wherein the former had tacitly accepted an authoritarian system in return for economic development and largesse, had unraveled in the south. The region had suffered most of the devastation in two wars, and the people had seen a disproportionate number of sons, husbands, fathers, and brothers killed or wounded in ultimately worthless military enterprises. At the same time, even before the August 1990 crisis, the bankrupt government no longer had the financial and economic wherewithal to satisfy the material needs of the people. If we add to this the Shia sense of political marginalization in a political system where they were excluded from the top hierarchy of the ruling elite and were not represented in accordance with demographic weight, it is not surprising that there existed a genuine sense of grievance among segments of the Shia populace. Finally, while the war with Iran may have enhanced the national consciousness of the Iraqi Shia, this does not mean that a sense of loyalty toward Saddam's regime existed, despite government's attempts to equate the two.

The government was used to periodic Kurdish uprisings and had, in the past, dealt with relatively manageable Shia disturbances. It was visibly stunned by the extent of the uprising in the south, which was explained by the failure of certain politically confused and weak people to rise above their sectarian tendencies and by the subversive role Iran played.¹³ In August 1991, the Iraqi Prime

Minister stated that the "moving force (behind the uprising) in the south was foreign,"¹⁴ meaning Iranian. The Prime Minister then advanced the interesting argument that sectarianism (one of the state's greatest security threats) did not receive a boost during the events of March 1991 because the Iraqi people in the south, in contrast to the situation during the Iran-Iraq War, had first-hand experience with Iranian-style Islam:

for they (the Iranian and pro-Iranian elements) had controlled the cities (in the south) for a period of time, and our people saw their deeds and how they dealt with people ... our people had the chance to experience ... the Iranian brand of Islamic system ... (they) had never seen such thing (sic) first-hand before.

*For example, when the Iranian agents controlled Karbala for 13 days and perpetrated what they did ... their practices were incredible and unprecedented in terms of repression, savagery and ugliness. Therefore the events did not succeed in forging closer ties between our people and the Iranian regime ...*¹⁵

What are the reasons for the insurrection's failure? First, it was not a general insurrection. Initially, the revolt was an explosion of pent-up rage and revenge characterized by an orgy of looting and destruction, offering no ideological vision. It was more against the regime rather than for anything. But when it did achieve a semblance of organization and success as a result of leadership provided by the units infiltrated from Iran, it attained an ideological hue which proved disastrous. Carried away by the euphoria, the rebels raised the green banner of Islam, portraits of Ayatollah Khomeini, and Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, and called for Islamic rule in Iraq.

This considerably dismayed opposition groups outside Iraq; even Shia fundamentalists went out of their way to deny that their agenda was to bring about Islamic rule. Member states of the coalition which had made clear their desire to see Saddam overthrown were thoroughly disconcerted by a rebellion which might result in the fragmentation of Iraq or bring to power a pro-Iranian fundamentalist regime. Their very neutrality during the revolt enabled the Iraqi military to move about freely and crush it.¹⁶

Most important was the reaction of the Baathist party elite, the Sunni Arabs, and the Shia middle class. For this secular-minded segment of the population, the idea of a fundamentalist regime coming into power aided by Iran was a horrifying vision. Furthermore, the atrocities committed against government officials were seen as a portent of the bloodbath to come if the rebels were to prevail. Finally, the political-military vacuum in the south in the aftermath of Iraqi defeat proved to be fleeting. The regime marshalled the considerable remaining military resources available. Apart from isolated incidence of defections and desertions, the army remained loyal and was sent into action against lightly-armed rebels who could not match its firepower.

In contrast to the Shia, the Kurds proved to be an intractable problem during the war with Iran. Traditionally, Kurds have taken advantage of the government's preoccupation with other pressing domestic or foreign issues to bring up demands for autonomy and to revolt if assured of foreign support. Throughout much of the war with Iran, both the two main and rival groups (the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) of Masoud Barzani and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) of Jalal Talabani) joined forces and solicited Iranian aid in an insurgency which caused the embattled government considerable security headaches and tied up two Iraqi army corps.

The Kurdish insurgency earned them ferocious treatment at the hands of the regime; between early 1987 and fall 1988, the government conducted a brutally effective pacification policy in Kurdistan which allegedly included the use of chemical weapons. A final offensive by over 60,000 veterans of the Iran-Iraq War broke the back of the insurgency.¹⁷ Between the end of the Iran-Iraq War and the Kuwait crisis, the Kurds changed strategies. Along with smaller Kurdish groups, PUK and KDP formed the Iraqi Kurdistan Front (IKF) to better coordinate activities. They stressed autonomy for Kurdistan within a democratic Iraq as their eventual aim in order to allay the hostility of other Iraqi opposition groups with whom they began seeking closer relations. When the Kuwait crisis broke, the IKF kept a close eye on events, and as international pressure on Iraq mounted, the temptation to take advantage of the situation presented itself. Iraq had to move forces away to the south, leaving only three

combat effective divisions in the north and a host of ill-motivated infantry troops. The Parastin (Kurdish intelligence) knew that morale was low; the number of desertions and of reservists who failed to report for duty were indicators. The Kurdish leadership initiated links with disgruntled pro-government Kurdish irregulars, the Fursan.¹⁸

The revolt erupted in both the rural and urban areas when Kurdish civilians, including professionals and intellectuals, as well as tens of thousands of Fursan units deserted the government side for the IKF.¹⁹ Barzani and Talabani acted quickly to take control of the rebellion and engaged their veteran *peshmerga* guerilla units in attacks against government forces. Within days, and for the first time in their history, the guerillas took several major urban centers, including the oil-center of Kirkuk. By mid-March 1991, the IKF declared that 75 percent of Kurdistan was in rebel hands. In the process, they defeated ill-motivated troops who surrendered in droves, joined the guerillas, or fled south. Immense quantities of heavy military equipment including several tanks, helicopters, anti-aircraft guns, artillery, and mortars, fell to the rebels.²⁰ The IKF rapidly moved to restore essential services and civil administration in the "liberated" areas.

After crushing the revolt in the south, Baghdad quickly moved its combat effective forces north, launching a lightning campaign which resulted in the retaking of all urban centers by 1 April 1991. The reasons for the Kurdish collapse are clear: they did not stand a chance against the combat-capable forces from the south whose residual capabilities they had underestimated, as Talabani ruefully put it: "We did not realize that the Republican Guards were still in such good shape."²¹ There was little military coordination between PUK and KDP forces; the rebels suffered from acute command and control problems. Kurdish leaders had great experience in handling small groups of guerillas, but not the vastly increased order of battle which they had in March 1991. Army deserters did not have time to train the guerillas in the use of captured heavy weaponry, and when the guerillas found themselves in possession of many urban centers, they were overwhelmed by the dual tasks of providing military leadership and emergency civilian administration. Lacking any experience in urban warfare and hoping to spare the urban population, the guerillas fled into the mountains. However, they found that they could not

conduct war in the rural regions because large pieces of territory had been depopulated (no hiding places or access to food from a sympathetic populace) and turned into free-fire zones, where Iraqi gunships shot everything that moved.²²

Neither the IKF nor the international community expected what happened next. Within days of the collapse of the revolt, hundreds of thousands of civilians began an exodus unprecedented in modern Iraqi Kurdish history; at its height, it encompassed over 50 percent of the population. Unlike earlier flights in past insurgencies which were almost wholly by farmers and shepherds who formed the core of the guerilla forces, the April 1991 exodus included civilians, the Fursan, and the Kurdish professional elite.²³ Many died because of cold weather or lack of food as they stampeded for the safety of Iran or Turkey. The exodus may have been prompted by fear of reprisals by government forces, including the possibility that chemical weapons could be used again. The refugee problem received enormous international coverage, prompting a massive humanitarian effort to provide the refugees with food, medicine, and shelter. On 8 April 1991, the European Community adopted a British proposal to create a "safe haven" on Iraqi territory north of the 36th parallel protected by coalition military forces and to which Kurdish civilians were encouraged to return.

At the height of the rebellions, the Iraqi opposition groups met in Beirut to rally international support for the insurrectionists and allay coalition fears that the Kurdish and Shia uprisings were designed either to fragment Iraq into a Kurdish north, Sunni Arab center, and Shia Arab south, or to establish an Islamic fundamentalist regime.²⁴ The opposition made a great show of unity, but the façade was shattered a month later on 19 April 1991, when the IKF leadership led by Talabani went to Baghdad to negotiate a deal for Kurdish self-government with Saddam based on the March 1970 autonomy plan which had been implemented only in part.

Despite their commitment to the overthrow of Saddam, the defeated Kurds had no option but to negotiate. At the same time, Saddam was at the weakest point of his political career, and the Kurdish leadership thought they would be able to extract the maximum concessions possible.²⁵ Specifically, Kurdish demands were: (1) an autonomous self-governing Kurdistan; (2) inclusion of the oil

center of Kirkuk which Kurds saw as a Kurdish city within the autonomous region; (3) a fair share of national oil revenues for the development of Kurdistan; (4) more meaningful Kurdish participation in the central government; (5) implementation of wide-ranging democratic reforms throughout the country; and (6) international guarantees to underpin the autonomy agreement. Baghdad balked at many of the Kurds' demands, adamantly refusing to cede Kirkuk to Kurdish control, arguing that it did not contain a Kurdish majority. Baghdad also had no intention of losing control over a substantial portion of the country's natural resources. As for international guarantees and continued Kurdish links with foreign governments and organizations, these would become a means of foreign pressure on Iraq.

For their part, the Kurds thought the government was not negotiating in good faith. There was a complete lack of trust on both sides. The Kurds were not impressed by the government's political reform program, which they did not think went far enough, and they continued to insist that Kirkuk must be part of the autonomous region.²⁶ Negotiations dragged on throughout summer until late August 1991, when Masoud Barzani decided that the Kurds needed to debate a draft of the autonomy plan among themselves. But signs of Kurdish vacillation and reluctance to sign an agreement were coupled with reports of a growing rift between Barzani and Talabani. The former did not put much stock in international guarantees, did not think the disputed status of Kirkuk presented an insurmountable obstacle to an agreement, and wished to strike a deal with Baghdad.²⁷ The latter seems to be moving back toward the mainstream opposition line (the other opposition groups had fiercely attacked the Kurds for negotiating with Saddam) that autonomy for Kurdistan and democracy for Iraq could only come about if Saddam were to be overthrown.

The Iraqi government, for its part, thinks that Barzani is sincere in wanting to implement an autonomy agreement but has absolutely no confidence in Jalal Talabani. It accuses Talabani of being a political chameleon who changes his views in accordance with the needs of the moment and sees him as a dire national security threat because of his links with foreign governments and his ill-disguised desire to see the fragmentation of Iraq.²⁸

Relations between the IKF and the government

deteriorated in the fall with the onset of fierce clashes between government troops and the peshmerga, in which the former suffered some severe defeats. However, government troops launched a major offensive in October which resulted in another exodus of Kurdish civilians from towns in the north. In mid-October, Baghdad imposed an economic blockade on supplies of food and fuel, suspended the salaries of government employees in the north, and effectively shut down what little authority and governmental infrastructure existed in IKF-held areas. This caused massive hardship because the region depended on the government for food and fuel, and one-third of the region's people depended on government for their livelihood. Matters were worsened by the guerillas' inexperience in civilian administration.²⁹

Baghdad's tactic may have been designed to put pressure on the Kurds to come to an agreement and thus reduce the threat of foreign (Turkish or Western) intervention (the Gulf War coalition maintains a small intervention force in south eastern Turkey called "Poised Hammer") or exacerbate the rift between Barzani and Talabani. It may have been designed to show the Kurds that their dependence on Baghdad for their fundamental needs and that their putative separatist tendencies will get them nowhere, since Iraq's neighbors, Turkey and Iran, are also worried by separatism among their Kurds and will not lend help to a landlocked Kurdistan.³⁰ Finally, this tactic may be to conserve government resources and not squander them needlessly in a region where the government has little authority anyway.

But Baghdad has had to carefully calibrate its actions so as not to provoke a coalition military response. In fact, there was neither a harsh verbal reaction to the government's assault on the Kurds nor calls for Baghdad to heed UN Security Council resolutions enacted to protect the Kurds after their rebellion was crushed last year.³¹ On the other hand, Baghdad's actions in the north since October are resulting in the slow but sure emergence of an independent Kurdish civil society and administrative structure which could found the basis of an independent Kurdistan.³² Kurdish leaders and intellectuals are aware of this trend and fear this may spark a renewal of political coordination between regional powers to prevent such an eventuality; this may be what Baghdad is hoping for.

One could also advance a different interpretation to account for Baghdad's actions in the last few months. Although there is no evidence to support this, one could argue that Baghdad may have come to believe that the breakaway of a part of Kurdistan (the mountainous north bordering Turkey and Iran but minus the important lowlands and Kirkuk) will rid Iraq of a large percentage of a people who have been nothing but a national security threat to Iraq since its inception, particularly in 1974-75, 1983-88, and 1990-92. Their rebellions have been costly to Iraq and have always been used by outside powers to put pressure on Iraq. By and large, the Kurds do not see themselves as Iraqis despite the fact that the country has offered them more than Iraq's neighbors have offered "their" Kurds.³³

Sanctions and Economic Devastation

The devastation suffered by Iraq in its war with Iran, which was concentrated primarily in the south, pales by comparison with what it suffered as a result of sanctions, the allied air campaign, and the insurrections. Even more damaging was the fact that sanctions and the war damage have had a mutually reinforcing effect in post-war Iraq.

The sanctions voted in on 6 August 1990 had an effect on food stocks, industrial raw materials, and private enterprise sectors. Before the war, Iraq imported 75 percent of its wheat, 100 percent of its soybean meal, and 90 percent of its maize, sugar, and vegetable oil. Economic sanctions also hit local industry, which relied heavily on foreign suppliers for spare parts, raw materials, machinery, and expertise. By fall 1991, the private sector, which had begun to play a more active role in the Iraqi economy since the end of the war with Iran, was badly affected by shortage of materials and goods. According to the head of the Iraqi industrial association, 16,000 private ventures were either working at reduced capacity or on the verge of stopping operations altogether.

There was much debate over whether sanctions would force Iraq out of Kuwait. It was believed that in the short-term, sanctions would not pressure Iraq into giving up Kuwait, as the Iraqi government would do its utmost to attenuate the effects by careful stockpiling and rationing of available food stocks, reduction of the population's already high caloric intake, and small-scale sanctions busing

across the borders with its neighbors. But, in the long-term if the embargo were to be enforced effectively, there would be tremendous economic dislocation, hardship, and paralysis as the country ran out of food, spare parts, and raw materials after mid-1991. However, the issue of whether sanctions in the long-term would have forced Iraq out of Kuwait became academic when the coalition decided to use force.

The massive allied air bombardment of Iraq was aimed not only at the military infrastructure, the armed forces, their supply dumps, and lines of communications, but also at a wide array of economic and industrial targets to amplify the economic impact of sanctions, incite the Iraqi populace against Saddam, degrade Iraq's ability to sustain itself as an industrial and military power, and create leverage over post-war Iraq which would not be able to repair extensive damage without outside help.³⁴ Iraq suffered particularly extensive damage in three critical areas.

1. The national electricity grid. The coalition air forces damaged 17 out of 20 electric powerplants, of which 11 are total write-offs. In the first week of the air campaign, the Iraqis shut down what remained of their electricity. At the height of summer when demand is at its peak, Iraqi electrical power capacity was at most 40 percent of the pre-war level of 9,500 megawatts. The damage to the electric grid forced closure or slow-down of operations in the public health sector, refrigeration plants where perishable foodstuffs were stored, and water sewage treatment units, resulting in raw sewage flowing through streets and into rivers and water treatment plants forcing hundreds of thousands to be cut off from access to uncontaminated water. As a result, the incidence of diarrheal diseases increased dramatically.³⁵

2. Telecommunications and transportation. Telephone exchanges, radio and television stations, as well as the country's extensive road and bridge network were targeted and suffered extensive damage. Half of Iraq's telephone lines were totally destroyed as well as scores of bridges, including key ones over the Tigris and Euphrates. The destruction of and damage to much of what was a very modern infrastructure hindered the ability of the government and relief agencies to deliver foodstuffs to the

populace in the outlying regions where shortages were more acute and degraded the ability of the state to re-establish administrative control over the country.

3. Oil industry. The oil industry has been absolutely critical to Iraq's economic development over the years and has provided the country with up to 95 percent of its foreign exchange. Coalition forces dropped 1,200 tons of high explosives in 518 sorties against 28 major oil installations including refining and export facilities, major oil storage tanks, pipelines, and pipeline junctions. The immediate goal was to bring about cessation of Iraq's refining capacity and thus delivery of fuel to the armed forces. The southern facilities suffered the greatest damage because of their proximity to important military targets (Republican Guards concentrations and supply dumps), while the facilities around Kirkuk suffered less during the war and incurred minor damage during the insurgency. The Iraqis repaired some of the damage, and by fall 1991 were able to produce 450,000 bpd for domestic consumption and 50,000 bpd for export to Jordan. Total production capacity, however, was estimated at 1.5 million bpd, of which one million bpd could be exported by way of the pipelines through Turkey once sanctions were lifted. Knowing full well that Iraq's recovery and reconstruction depends on resumption of full production, the Iraqi Ministry of Oil has tried to attract the interest of foreign oil companies in exploiting the huge oilfields in the south and by stating that by the end of 1992, it could recover the pre-war production level of 3.2 million bpd if it gets desperately needed chemical additives, spare parts, and help to repair the damage.

A UN mission which visited Iraq in mid-March 1991 put the carnage to the country in dramatic terms, stating that the war had "wrought near apocalyptic results" on a highly urbanized and mechanized society. It drew the world's attention to the combined effects of sanctions and war damage upon the population, noting rapidly dwindling stocks of basic necessities such as food and medicine, and declining health and sanitary conditions. Iraq repeatedly requested that it be allowed to sell oil to provide basic needs, but in its first formal review of sanctions in June 1991, the Security Council concluded that there was no case for lifting them as Iraq had not fully complied with

the provisions of SCR 687.

Another UN report on Iraq's economic and social crisis in mid-July 1991 made sobering reading and urgently requested that Iraq be allowed to import \$7 billion worth of foods, medicine, and spare parts. The Security Council "relented" and passed SCR 706 allowing Iraq to sell \$1.6 billion worth of oil over a period of six months. Proceeds of the sale would go into an escrow account to be divided into three unequal amounts: almost \$1 billion would go to buy food and medicine, while the rest is to be divided between reparations and paying for UN expenses. Clearly, there is to be no major let-up of the sanctions regime.

The State, Reconstruction and Reforms: Attempts to Restore Security and Stability

The portrait of Saddam as an omnipotent ruler reflected in a personality cult unmatched anywhere else in the Middle East was shattered by the defeat and insurrections. Not only were posters and statues attacked and defaced, but profound bitterness was expressed by many who felt Saddam had badly miscalculated or blundered into a trap laid for him by the coalition. The media emphasized the need for Saddam's leadership in the face of current difficulties and coalition insistence that Saddam must be overthrown: "The years of war with Iran have proven the soundness of the conclusion that Iraqi dignity, future territorial integrity are contingent upon maintaining the leadership of Saddam ..." ³⁶ Saddam is also the symbol of Iraq's achievements, having effected a "qualitative leap" bringing Iraq out of its backward existence into an era of military strength and scientific progress. The message is clear: only under Saddam can Iraq regain its former strength. But Saddam cannot rule alone; he has moved to strengthen his control over the apparatus of state.

The powerful position of fellow Takritis, ³⁷ who with the very rich upper middle class constitute the privileged elite, has been enhanced. The innermost circle of power is made up of Takritis who are direct relatives of Saddam: half-brothers, sons, cousins, and sons-in-law who occupy the top positions in the Special Bureau and the security-intelligence services. The latter underwent reorganization, reduced from four to two services under the control of Sabawi Ibrahim, one of Saddam's half-brothers.

Ali Hasan al-Majid, a paternal cousin of Saddam noted for his "flair" in pacifying unruly regions, was appointed Interior Minister in March 1991. Takritis and other Sunni Arabs have reinforced their positions i.e. the officer corps, which has been extensively purged of officers who are politically suspect or of those who failed in their duties during the war. Husain Kamal Hasan, Saddam's cousin and son-in-law, is Minister of Defense, while the new chief of staff, General Iyad Fatih al-Rawi, a former head of the Republican Guards, is a Sunni Arab.

Because of their proximity to Saddam and control of the top echelons of the state, Takritis are better placed than any other group to constitute a threat to Saddam's regime. Loyalty to Saddam is cemented not only by family ties but by other factors: (1) collective fear of and reliance on Saddam, who has been adroit in handling his family over the years and has not hesitated to punish and reward in accordance with the needs of the moment; (2) fear that if Saddam is overthrown either by them or through a coup, they would also disappear in a bloodbath;³⁸ (3) Takritis have done very well despite the regime's strong anti-corruption ethic (when the government introduced its privatization measures in 1987, Takritis bought up at low prices state enterprises being privatized and then sold them for considerable profit to middle class businessmen).

The Baath party suffered a great loss of morale and prestige during the rebellions.³⁹ Officials were not prepared for trouble, many were either killed by the rebels or panicked and fled. A commission of four high-ranking government officials was established and given the job of evaluating the conduct of party cadre during the crisis: hundreds were removed from their posts and many arrests were made, especially in the middle Euphrates region where the Shia uprising occurred. A decision was made to reduce the size of the party, and many are being asked to surrender party membership. The regime feels that in order to maintain control over society and revitalize the party, it is better to rely on the old vanguard and elitist party organization with its more dedicated and ideologically pure individuals with a can-do attitude rather than have it weakened by the presence of self-seeking individuals. In Saddam's own words: "Let those who wish to leave the Baath party do so, so that the Baath continue as a bright lantern to our people and glorious nation."⁴⁰ Saddam also stressed that in the future, party

officials will be carefully monitored and those applying for leadership positions will have their public and private life scrutinized first.

Saddam manages to retain control and enough support in the *center*, which is not only a geographic term denoting the Sunni Arab heartland with the capital Baghdad, but also a socioeconomic and cultural one characterized by the nation's highest standards of living, economic development, urbanization, and education and thus home to the vast majority of Iraq's large middle class professionals and intellectuals.⁴¹

Why the center held during the rebellions may be explained by a conjunction of several factors. First, there was the sense of hostility expressed toward the goals of the rebellions: the Kurds are seen as putative separatists, and even if their quest for autonomy were genuine, they could not be allowed to control oil-rich Al-Tamim province. The worst nightmare was the perceived desire of the rebels in the south to establish an Islamic fundamentalist regime which would overturn the politically and economically privileged strata in the center which also includes Shia Kurds and Christian Arabs. Second, the center may have held due to a genuine sense of loyalty among a core of the population wedded to the Baath party's commitment to secularism, economic development, and the promotion of a distinct and non-sectarian Iraqi nationalism. A third alternative recognizes the "legitimacy of the worst alternative"⁴² among segments of the population: the belief that if Saddam goes, things would not get better, but worse and dramatically so. Not only might the regime unravel, but so might Iraq. Fourth, fear of the pervasive presence of the security and military apparatus in the center which the regime knows is the key to control of the country. There is a heavy Republican Guards division of 15,000 men permanently based near the capital; this may have induced caution. In order to widen its base of support in the center, Saddam has resorted to a policy of mobilizing the Sunni Arab tribes. After two decades of castigating them as symbols of a feudal and reactionary past, the tribes are now considered an important pillar of Iraqi society.

But the center does have its grievances and problems. (1) Socioeconomic standards of living have declined, including spiraling prices (inflation is at 2000 percent) with wages and salaries which have not risen in real terms for the last three years.

There is no job security in the stagnant economy, and unemployment has reached 20 percent. The level of poverty has increased: the middle class has seen its savings wiped out, and many are being forced to pawn their valuables or take second jobs (driving a cab or hawking wares in the streets), while more and more of the poorer classes are relying on the state for their basic needs. The rationed products provided by the government furnish only 55 percent of required calories, according to Minister of Commerce, Mohammed Mahdi Salih. (2) Bitterness and humiliation over Iraq's erosion of national sovereignty and power is felt most acutely in this region. (3) There is resentment over the lack of political freedoms and lack of public accountability on the part of the government.⁴³ Much of Iraq's current despair has been reflected in a calamitous decline in social and moral mores: rising crime, price gouging, prostitution, corruption, and a lack of civic virtue among businessmen who are more interested in importing (via Jordan) cigarettes, whiskey, and other luxury items instead of essential foods. All of this has occurred in a state which had stiff sanctions against such "deviant behavior." Many Iraqis who could afford it took the opportunity of emigrating when the government lifted restrictions against travel in May 1991; the exodus was such that restrictions were reimposed.⁴⁴

Saddam realized that the restoration of law and order was not enough. To maintain the people's loyalty and restore public confidence, the regime had to move quickly to implement the dual tasks of reconstruction and of political reforms; this was the theme of Saddam's first speech after the end of the war. That same month Saddam appointed Saadun Hammadi, a Shia and veteran Baathist, to be Prime Minister heading a cabinet of technocrats charged with reconstruction, political and economic reforms and an attenuation of Iraq's international isolation.

The task of reconstruction is enormous; Iraqi officials claim the Kuwait affair cost \$200 billion, to which should be added another \$200 billion spent on the Iran-Iraq War.⁴⁵ Long-term reconstruction will depend upon foreign exchange, trade, and technical expertise, and a willingness on the part of the Iraqi private sector to take heed of the government's exhortation to play a more vigorous role in the economy. Iraqis know that their ability to engage in long-term reconstruction in the current climate with sanctions in place is not possible. Even

if sanctions are lifted, the obstacles are formidable: indebtedness makes the country a terrible credit risk; reparations payments will siphon off as much as 30 percent of Iraqi income for the indefinite future.⁴⁶

The Iraqis have plunged into short-term reconstruction (emergency and immediate repairs) with the resources at hand. Problems will be compensated for by efficient management, great resolve, and enthusiasm. Priority has been given to the restoration of basic services and facilities that directly impinge upon the welfare of the citizens: schools, hospitals, oil refineries, power stations, roads, and bridges. This process was carried out at a remarkable pace, and by late summer 1991, outside observers were impressed by the scope of Iraq's achievements.⁴⁷

In March 1991, Saddam had declared that the leadership's commitment to building a "democratic society based on constitution, law, institutions, and (party) pluralism ... is an irrevocable and final decision." Hammadi expressed the belief that Iraq would move slowly but surely from the dominance of a revolutionary phase of politics, which Iraq has existed under since 1968, to the phase of constitutional politics characterized by supremacy of law. Sweeping political reforms were to include the implementation of a constitution drafted in 1990, a free press, eventual abolition of the supra-legal Revolutionary Court charged with trying crimes against the state, and the ruling Revolutionary Command Council and the establishment of a multi-party system.

However, there are obstacles to opening up the system. The current apathy, cynicism, and economic travails of the Iraqi people do not bode well for the viability of political reforms. Disbelief that the regime is genuinely committed to reform is coupled with the fact that democracy is not the most pressing issue for Iraqis whose daily life is now one of a struggle for survival. However, the steps to create the necessary intermediate structures for an independent "civil society" (i.e. professional associations, clubs, unions, and independent newspapers) have to be taken by the middle class.

The regime may find it very difficult to shed its authoritarian proclivities or may fear that if it goes too far too quickly it may lose control of the situation as did the regimes in Eastern Europe. The new multi-party law passed by the National Assembly on 24 August 1991 is indicative of both the regime's

definition of competitive party politics and of its fears. The law dropped an initial provision banning any party whose ideology was inimical to Baathism but insisted that all parties "should value and be proud of Iraq's heritage, glorious history, and achievements attained by national struggle; particularly by the great revolutions of 14 July 1958 and 17-30 July 1968" which overthrew the monarchy and brought to power the Baath respectively. Parties cannot be founded on the basis of apostasy, sectarianism, racism, regionalism, or anti-Arabism; an initial ban on religious parties was lifted but communist, sectarian, and separatist groups are proscribed. This makes sense given the ethno-sectarian make-up and current political uncertainty. Only the Baath party can engage in political activity within the armed forces and security services, a condition betraying both the fear that hostile forces might proselytize within these institutions as a means to overthrow the Baath, and the regime's determination to ensure that the ruling party's domination of political life remains unchallenged. In September, Saddam made clear that Western democracy is not welcome in Iraq and that Iraqis who adhere to it would not be allowed any leading positions in the political, social and cultural domains.

The surprise removal of Hammadi from office on 13 September at the height of the Baath party's 10th regional (Iraqi) congress convened to elect new members raised questions about the future of political reforms, because of the perception that Hammadi was committed to their implementation and that he may have expressed his views too forcefully for some at the congress. The Beirut paper *Al-Hayat* claims that Hammadi fell victim to the party's "old guard" which feared for the party's position. But the situation may have been more complicated than that: there was clearly a vote of no confidence in Hammadi, because during the elections for the regional command only 27 delegates out of 261 voted, leaving him a humiliating 39th out of 42 possible candidates. Hammadi may have run afoul of the leadership for not having achieved solid progress in all aspects of the task of reconstruction. He had failed to deal with economic problems, shortages, inefficiency, curb inflation, or bring about a lifting of sanctions and Iraqi rapprochement with the outside world. Saddam had vowed in March 1991 that ministers

would be given four to six months to prove themselves. Muhammad Hamza al-Zubaydi, a former minister, is a political "light weight" who is not expected to be too independent-minded, was Hammadi's replacement. The congress, dubbed the Congress of Reconstruction and Jihad, proved to be an endorsement of the Baath party's position in Iraqi political life, of Saddam who was re-elected secretary-general of the regional command, and of most of his closest associates who retained their posts.

The Restructuring of the Armed Forces

The military has undergone tremendous changes as a result of defeat in the war, the insurrections, and the resumption of a policy of restructuring initiated in 1988-1990 which had the intention of developing the Iraqi armed forces into a highly mobile armored and mechanized offensive force with tremendous firepower;⁴⁸ whether this policy will succeed now is dependent on the ending of the arms embargo and the revitalization of Iraq's arms industry. Initial figures of Iraqi losses led early reports to conclude that Iraq's remaining army consisted largely of poorly equipped low-grade infantry divisions.⁴⁹ By summer's end this was found to be inaccurate; the war had destroyed 45 percent to 50 percent of a huge inventory, but Iraq still retained 2,400 tanks; 4,400 Armored Personnel Carriers and Infantry Fighting Vehicles; between 1,000 and 2,000 artillery pieces, mortars, and howitzers; and 250 multiple rocket launchers.

Despite its impressive size and inventory (see Table 1) the Iraqi Air Force has always given less than impressive results in Iraq's wars, during the Kurdish insurgencies and the opening phases of the Iran-Iraq War in particular. Although largely incapable of providing ground forces with effective close air support,⁵⁰ by 1986 it had developed a relatively effective long-range strike capability against Iranian strategic targets. As Adnan Khayrallah, Iraqi Defense Minister for much of the Iran-Iraq War, put it: "the air force is the long arm. The task of the air force is to fly deep inside Iranian territory seeking out vital targets which should be attacked and adversely affect Iranian military capabilities."⁵¹ Although Iraq's long-range aerial capabilities did not achieve all the results hoped for, the Iraqi Air Force still represented one of the few

Table 1: Iraqi Order of Battle (January 1991)*			
Origin	Make	Type	Quantity
PRC	Xian F-7	Interceptor	80
USSR	MiG-23E Flogger	Interceptor	20
USSR	MiG-21 PFM/MF/C/E/F/J Fishbed	Interceptor	200
USSR	MiG-25 Foxbat A	Interceptor	30
USSR	MiG-29 Fulcrum	Interceptor	40
USSR	Su-24MK Fencer	Attack	24
USSR	Su-25 Frogfoot	Attack	30
USSR	Su-7/20/22 Fitter	Attack	80
USSR	MiG-23BN Flogger H	Fighter	70
France	Mirage F-1EQ5/EQ5-200	Attack	64
France	Mirage F-1EQ	Fighter	30
Argentina	IA-58A Pucara	Ground Attack	20
USSR	MiG-27M	Ground Attack	10
USSR	MiG-17 Fresco	Trainer	20
PRC	Xian F-6	Trainer	40
USSR	MiG-25 Foxbat B	Reconnaissance	7
USSR/Iraq	Ilyushin Adnan 1/-2	Advanced Early Warning	3
USSR	Tu-16 Badger	Bomber	8
USSR	Tu-22 Blinder	Bomber	9
PRC	Xian B-6D Badger	Bomber	4
USSR	An-12B Cub	Transport	6
USSR	An-2 Colt	Transport	10
USSR	An-24 Coke	Transport	6
USSR	An-26 Curl	Transport	2
Czechoslovakia	Aero L-29 Delfin	Trainer	10
Czechoslovakia	Aero L-39 Albatross	Trainer	50
USSR	MiG-15UTI Midget	Trainer	20
USSR	MiG-21U Mongol	Trainer	70
USSR	MiG-29UB Fulcrum	Trainer	8
France	Mirage F-1B	Trainer	16
Switzerland	Pilatus PC-7/9	Trainer	69 (50/19)
USSR	Su-22U Fitter E	Trainer	6
Brazil/Egypt	AOI Emb 312 Tucano	Trainer	80

*Fixed-wing aircraft of all types.

Sources: *Military Aviation News*, AI. 355/5/91, 209-212; *The Military Balance 1989-1990*, 101-102; Norman Friedman, *Desert Victory: The War for Kuwait* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1991), 307-309; *Military Powers*, vol. 4 (Paris: Société I3C, 1989). There are, of course, some discrepancies between these sources; indeed, *The Military Balance*, despite being a most useful quantitative source, traditionally has been beset with serious methodological problems. The rough guideline to be followed is that the IrAF had a total of 950-1200 aircraft of all types, of which 650-800 were combat aircraft, which includes interceptors, ground attack, long-range strike planes, and bombers. (N.B. Some of the trainers like the Tucano and Pilatus could double up as low-grade strafing and ground support planes). The bombers were all obsolete, and most were probably non-operational.

regional air forces with experience in long-range operations.

Now, after the Gulf War and the Iraqi Air Force's dismal performance or lack of it, this capability has disappeared (see Table 2). The air force suffered the most devastating losses: of a pre-war total of more than 700 combat planes Iraq had no more than 350 to 400 left, of which it is assumed many are suffering from low serviceability due to lack of spare parts and maintenance. Reportedly 115 warplanes, including many of Iraq's top of the line Soviet and French built fighters, along with about 30 Iraqi Airways civilian jets, fled to neutral Iran over the course of the air war (see Table 3). Most of the helicopter fleet of the Iraqi Army Aviation Corp survived the Kuwait War intact, and during the insurrections, Iraq's gunships used their awesome firepower with devastating effect. The current combat status of what was once the fourth-largest army in the world has been summed up by Institute for Strategic Studies' latest *Military Balance*: "while Iraq's offensive capability has undoubtedly been destroyed, it still maintains a strong army capable of crushing insurgency and of offering some measure of deterrence against attack." In short, Iraq will find it difficult to project its power beyond its borders, although it retains an impressive capability to move its armored forces around the country thanks to a large tank transporter fleet.

The army has been restructured, instead of a ramshackle one million man strong force, the Iraqis now have between 350,000 and 400,000 men, of which the Republican Guards constitute a substantial and growing element. Most of the other units are special forces and regular army armor and

Table 2: Iraqi Fixed-Wing Aircraft Losses During the War	
Air-to-air combat	37
Ground strafing	55
Capture of air bases by coalition forces	16
Destruction of hardened aircraft shelters	141
Total	249

Sources: *Military Aviation News*; Friedman, *Desert Victory*. This total of losses has not given us a breakdown of aircraft type; I have been unable to get a complete breakdown. But we do know that the 36 aircraft shot down in air-to-air combat were fighters/fighter-bombers/interceptors: six MiG-29s; nine Mirage F-1s; four Mig-21s; two Mig-25s; eight Mig-23s; six Su-22s; two Su-25s. See Friedman, *Desert Victory*, 357-360.

mechanized divisions shorn of the low-grade infantry divisions which performed dismally in both Gulf Wars and which have been demobilized or disbanded. Throughout the spring and summer, the army received substantial pay and benefit increases in order to restore its morale. The army is now a leaner and more professional force which would be more formidable if Iraq were to re-arm.⁵² The new Defense Minister, Ali Hasan al-Majid, has stated that its tasks include deterring attacks against Iraqi territorial integrity, restoring internal stability, and helping in the reconstruction of the country.

Iraq's military industries program was a comprehensive effort under the Ministry of Industry and Military Industries (MIMI).⁵³ Iraq's extensive investment in its military industrialization program had its genesis in a series of government decisions implemented in the latter half of the 1970s. It was intended to have Iraq produce much of its own weaponry, reduce dependence on the fickle Soviets, and send a message to the world that Iraq was an up and coming power not to be trifled with.⁵⁴ By 1987, Iraq had achieved self-sufficiency in ammunition and many basic weapons and had established a burgeoning semi-covert unconventional weapons program. Many MIMI installations were destroyed

Table 3: Iraqi "Losses" to Iran*		
Type	Number	Comments
Mirage F-1	24	Iraq has difficulties with French planes
Su-24	24	Iran has or is purchasing from Russia
Su-22	40	
Su-20	4	
Su-25	7	
MiG-23 BN	4	
MiG-29	4	Iran has already purchased from Russia
MiG-23ML trainer	8	
Total	115	

*121 IAF planes fled to Iran of which six crashed on landing, leaving 115 air force planes in Iranian hands. This total does not include 33 civil aircraft and one Adnan advanced early warning aircraft.

Source: Iraqi Foreign Minister Ahmad Husein, in Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, *Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 15 April 1991, 26.

during the coalition air campaign.

However, by mid-summer 1991, as a result of visits by UN inspections teams as mandated by SCR 687, intelligence garnered from an Iraqi defector, and slow and reluctant Iraqi disclosures (often as a result of pressure put on Iraq by Western powers which voiced their readiness to use military means to force Iraqi compliance), it was discovered that Iraq had extensive stockpiles of chemical weapons and ballistic missiles and an extensive and sophisticated uranium enrichment program using parallel but separate methods which would have eventually given Iraq a steady supply of enriched uranium, the key ingredient in a fission bomb. The UN teams were impressed by the breadth and scope of Iraq's "Manhattan Project," its progress (Iraq had also made significant strides in bomb design), and the skill of Iraqi engineers and scientists. Iraq continues to protest attempts to disarm it, pointing with justification to the growing unconventional weapons programs of other regional powers.

Iraqi Security in the Global and Regional Context

Iraq's relations with the outside world remain in deep-freeze despite persistent Iraqi efforts to attenuate or break out of isolation. Currently, Iraq sees itself under siege from and threatened by several enemy groupings which have continued with the tacit alliance established before the Gulf War: the "colonialists" or "imperialists" (the West), the "reactionary" Arab states (Arab members of the War coalition) which were motivated by envy, injustice, and treachery; the Zionists; and the Iranians.⁵⁵

Iraqis point out that they are not surprised by the stance taken by the US and Britain during the crisis and after the war, given the deterioration in Iraqi relations with the two powers.⁵⁶ France's active participation in the coalition was an unpleasant surprise given the special relationship the two countries had developed over two decades; Iraq's disillusionment was reflected in Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan's postwar statement that France had lost its credibility.⁵⁷ In Iraqi eyes, the West did not go to war over Kuwait, but rather because it could not countenance the emergence of a militarily strong and politically influential Iraq. Under Saddam, Iraq was breaking the shackles of

military, political, and technological dependence. The West could not tolerate the emergence of a strong Arab state or leader. Iraq with its accomplishments had violated the limits imposed upon scientific and technological development in the Third World;⁵⁸ Iraq's violation of these limits was a threat to the West's domination of the region as well as a danger to its creation, the "Zionist entity" (Israel). Indeed, with their war against Iraq, the Western "imperialists" and the Zionists, aided by their reactionary stooges in the region, finally carried out in a devastating manner the measures they had threatened to take in 1988-1990 against Iraqi scientific and technological infrastructure.

But long after the end of the war, Iraq expressed an interest in restoring political and economic relations with the Western powers which were its main trading partners before the crisis. The West has not been forthcoming; Iraq's relations with that powerful group of countries is dictated by the latter's continued insistence that Saddam must be removed from power. A coup by the army or the party did not materialize, and despite calls for the Iraqi people to overthrow Saddam, Washington was not interested in helping the rebels during the insurrections because of its fears that Iraq might fragment or fall under the domination of Iran. "We don't want to involve ourselves in the internal conflict in Iraq,"⁵⁹ was White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater's comment in late March 1991.

In order to get rid of Saddam, the strategy of the US as well as its closest allies is to maintain steady and unrelenting pressure in the form of sanctions as mandated by SCR 661. As put by Robert Gates, President Bush's deputy National Security advisor on 7 May 1991, "all possible sanctions will be maintained on Iraq while he (Saddam) is in power ... Iraq will be nothing but a pariah state as long as he is there ... Saddam is discredited and cannot be redeemed."⁶⁰ Humiliating derogation of Iraqi national sovereignty as mandated by SCR 687. The aim is to persuade Iraqis that neither their life nor status of their country will get normalized until Saddam disappears.

Iraq found no comfort in the position of the Soviet Union during the crisis. Although the latter took a strong stance against Iraq diplomatically, it was not a member of the military coalition and did display considerable ambivalence about the possible use of force. But it did little to prevent the slide toward war,

and a last minute effort by Soviet President Gorbachev to avoid a ground assault was brushed aside by President Bush, symbolizing for Iraq the irrelevance of the Soviet Union. After the war, Iraq avoided criticizing the USSR, possibly in the hope that it might at some point attenuate Iraq's isolation. When Gorbachev was overthrown in the short-lived coup of August 1991, the Iraqi media launched into a scathing critique of the harm that the Soviet leader had done to his country's global position by his policies and to Iraq by his role of "passive spectator" during the Kuwait crisis.⁶¹

Any Iraqi attempts to play a pan-Arab role (support of the Palestinians and opposition to the "imperialist" Western presence) in regional politics are now limited by the country's exhaustion, lack of resources, and growing contempt for the Arabs. Iraq continues to maintain good relations with those Arab countries sympathetic to it during the war: Algeria, Sudan, Jordan, Tunisia, and Libya. But as early as April 1991, Iraq made clear its willingness to turn over a new leaf in its relations with the leading Arab members of the coalition, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, declaring that ties cannot remain severed forever. Iraq even attended the Arab League foreign ministers' summit in Cairo in May 1991, but Iraq continues to be seen with suspicion and fear by many Arab countries.

An inter-Arab attempt to guarantee Gulf security and stability emerged in the wake of the war, when in early March 1991, the Arab coalition countries (Egypt, Syria, and all the Gulf powers) issued the Damascus Declaration, stating that Egyptian and Syrian forces already deployed in the Arabian Peninsula would be the foundation of an Arab peace force to "guarantee the security and safety of the Arab states in the Gulf region."

The attempt at inter-Arab cooperation foundered when Egypt withdrew its forces in spring and Syria showed ambivalence. It became very clear that each member of the proposed security system had its own different agenda. Egypt, cognizant of the extent of the Iraqi defeat and the imbalance in the region, wanted to focus on the Iranian threat to the Gulf. Indeed, Egyptian leaders and defense planners are increasingly worried by what they see as Iran's growing threat to the region and to Egypt, as well as by the significance for Arab power *vis-à-vis* Iran, Turkey, and Israel of the destruction of Iraqi military power.⁶² Syria, for its part, has very few links with

the Gulf countries and cannot afford to keep significant forces in the region because of the Israeli threat. Syria also did not wish to alienate its powerful friend, Iran, which had been excluded from this all-Arab security system.

The smaller Gulf Arab states, traumatized by the Iraqi action, have adopted the short-sighted policy of perceiving Iraq as a permanent threat and believe that their security can best be guaranteed by a permanent Western military presence. They were also uneasy over the exclusion of non-Arab Iran from the regional security structure that was supposed to be implemented, but how they hope to reconcile Iran to a permanent Western military presence is unclear. Saudi Arabia is loath to rely on a permanent Western presence and has shown a contempt for the Kuwaiti decision to embrace it without reserve or understanding of the long-term impact. Nor does Saudi Arabia view Iraq as a permanent threat, although it is very keen on seeing Saddam toppled from power. However, it has decided to embark on a massive expansion of its currently ineffective ground forces to give it an effective military deterrent with localized offensive capabilities to fight off an aggressor.⁶³ Despite growing Arab sympathy for Iraq's plight, fears for its future and dismay over what is seen as the excessive weakening of Iraq, little progress has been made as the Arabs continue to focus their attention on the Arab-Israeli problem.

Iraq's relations with its two powerful non-Arab neighbors, Iran and Turkey, were full of tension throughout the summer and fall of 1991. Iranians greeted Iraq's invasion of Kuwait with glee because the latter had been one of Iraq's greatest benefactors during the Iran-Iraq War. This was then tempered by the realization that Iraqi annexation of Kuwait was a significant strategic threat to Iranian interests: Iraq would be the swing producer and dominant force in OPEC instead of more supple Saudi Arabia; it would have the financial wherewithal to engage in an even more massive build-up and leave Iran far behind in the arms race between the two; and Iraq's better access to the waters of the Gulf would enable it to build up significant naval power in a body of water Iran regards as a *mare nostrum*. Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani made it clear that Iran would not accept Iraqi annexation of Kuwait even if other countries did so. Saddam moved to resolve differences with Iran in mid-August 1991 when he

announced that Iraq would accept Iranian conditions for a formal end to the war between them: Iraq withdrew from occupied Iranian territory and agreed to joint ownership of the contentious Shatt al-Arab river. By this surprise move, Saddam may have been trying to protect his back or enlist Iranian support.⁶⁴

Iran maintained a studious neutrality throughout the war, despite calls by more radical political elements to join Iraq in a holy war against the presence of the "infidel" Westerners. Iran's top leadership expressed the view that the Gulf War was not one between right (Iraq) or Islam and wrong (the West) or "blasphemy," as Saddam who seemed to have suddenly discovered religion maintained, but was "between two evils," although it expressed deep solidarity for and sympathy with the Iraqi people's sufferings during the air bombardment.⁶⁵

Rafsanjani saw no advantage in joining ranks with Iran's former enemy, Iraq, in a war that the latter was bound to lose, but believed that there was everything to be gained by adopting a policy of neutrality characterized by a situation where Iran would play a mediating role between the antagonists.⁶⁶ Iran allowed the Iraqi Air Force planes to land in Iranian air bases because it seemed to have been presented with a *fait accompli*, but quickly made it publicly clear that the planes would be impounded for the duration of the war, and their pilots would be treated as prisoners of war.⁶⁷ Iran, nonetheless, saw the Western-led war against Iraq as a potential national security threat to itself if it were to have gotten out of hand and: (1) Iraq were threatened by dismemberment, leaving a destabilizing power vacuum in the region; (2) Turkey decided to grab oil-rich northern Iraq; (3) Israel directly intervened in the war.⁶⁸ But the worst-case scenarios did not take place, and at the end of the Gulf War, Iran discovered that with little direct cost to itself its national security had been enhanced by the collapse of Iraqi power and the destruction of much of Iraq's offensive capabilities.⁶⁹

On the other hand, Iran's behavior in the aftermath of the Gulf War reconfirmed in Iraqi eyes Iran as being a dire threat to Iraqi internal and national security. After the war, Iran's active and overt support for the rebels in the south stunned the Iraqis who bitterly denounced the "betrayal" by Iran, leading Saddam to refer to that country as a "poisoned dagger."⁷⁰ Strident propaganda against the Baath regime and calls by Iran for Saddam to

step down from power (President Rafsanjani called upon Saddam to stop killing his people and to give up power, while spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei declared Saddam to be dangerous and detrimental to Islam⁷¹) were seen as interference in Iraqi domestic affairs and as a throwback to Iranian behavior under Ayatollah Khomeini between 1979-1988. Iran's support for the rebels in the south was seen as part and parcel of a longstanding global conspiracy, of which Iran was a member, to bring about instability and anarchy in Iraq, with the aim of eventually fragmenting the country into its constituent ethno-sectarian parts.⁷²

The Iraqi government seemed to have been genuinely surprised by Iran's postwar role and overt hostility as reflected in the following rather pitiful statement:

*We did not expect neighbors, with whom we had sincerely determined to establish peace, to turn the pages of the past, and to turn their territories into a springboard for such harm and treachery against Iraq, at a time when Iraq had valiantly and courageously defended principles and goals, which we believed, as we followed their public slogans, were common to both (sic) us.*⁷³

If this statement was a real expression of Iraqi thinking during the crisis, then it betrayed a profound misreading of the situation. It ignored the depth of Iranian hatred for and fear of Baathist Iraq. Iran fought a bruising eight-year war with Iraq which it believes it could have won. Iran could not be expected not to take advantage of the difficulties experienced by an enemy which seemed on the verge of collapse. Iran has unfinished business with Iraq's Baathist rulers; Tehran's determination to see the Baghdad government overthrown seemed within reach. Nor were the Islamic slogans which Baghdad took to mouthing against the "infidels" during the crisis calculated to win over Tehran's sympathy; the latter saw Baghdad's tactics as mere ideological opportunism, while in the eyes of the ruling elite in Tehran, Baathist Iraq was a notoriously unreliable neighbor. What is utterly mystifying is how Iraq's similarly negative perceptions of Iran which the Baathists more than any other rulers of Iraq have tried to embed into the consciousness of the Iraqi people could have been so dramatically superseded by positive feelings.

However, in the aftermath of the rebellions, Iran seems to have returned to its position of being perceived as the paramount regional existential threat to Iraq's territorial integrity and ideological values.

Iran's tremendous inherent strengths, secure geopolitical position, economic potential, demographic weight (population of 56 million is more than the combined population of all Arab countries of the Gulf, including Iraq), and historical and cultural cohesion reflected in a vibrant Islamic ideology, have been vastly enhanced by Iran's improved image and activist regional role and the weaknesses and problems of its neighbors in the post-Gulf War period. The dissolution of the Soviet Union has seen the independence of a number of Central Asian Muslim republics culturally and religiously⁷⁴ linked to Iran, and the latter is assiduously wooing them in competition with Turkey and Saudi Arabia. Iran does not now have to concentrate major military units on its northern flank as it had to for many years against the Soviet Union.

Neither weak Afghanistan, still ruled by a government seeking to legitimize itself in the teeth of strong opposition, nor Pakistan, in the grip of domestic instability and embroiled in a quarrel with its neighbor India over Kashmir, pose a threat to Iran. However, the crushing of Iraq in the Gulf War coupled with the inherent weaknesses of the Arab states of the Gulf have enabled Iran to enhance its role in an area of traditional concern: the Persian Gulf. It is now the dominant power in the Gulf region, having supplanted a defeated Iraq. Since the end of the war, Iran has engaged in a diplomatic "charm offensive" in the Gulf designed to show the conservative Arab states that they had nothing to fear from Iran. Iraq, for its part, does not view with any great deal of equanimity Iran's resurgence in the Arab Gulf. Baathist Iraq had spent the better part of a decade trying to shut Iran out of the Arab side of the Gulf. Now, despite its claims that Iran represents a threat to the Arab nature of the Gulf and that Iraq must not be ignored in any future attempts to construct a regional security system, not much heed is being paid to its position due to the short-sighted and vindictive policies pursued by the Arabs.

Iran's growing military power is another source of acute worry for Iraq (and the other Arab states). Currently, Iran's military power is not

commensurate with that country's stature as a major power in the Middle East or indeed in the Gulf region itself. As we saw above, Iraq had destroyed much of Iran's stock of arms in the campaigns of 1988, and the latter still cannot conduct major offensive operations across its borders; in fact, its forces are merely adequate for deterrence.⁷⁵ But the situation is changing: ever since the end of the Iran-Iraq War, Iran has been fishing with mixed success for ways to conduct a military build-up to reduce the imbalance between it and pre-Gulf War Iraq.⁷⁶ Despite Iraq's defeat, this build-up has now accelerated in light of the lessons Iran learned from both the Iran-Iraq and Gulf Wars, growing access to weaponry from the former Soviet-bloc, and developing links with important arms producers outside the West.

Iran's multi-billion dollar build-up has received a great deal of press recently as has its alleged quest for the ultimate "unconventional" arms: nuclear weapons.⁷⁷ Specifically, Iran is seeking or has already purchased more SCUD-B ballistic missiles from North Korea, SU-24 attack aircraft (Fencer), and MIG-29 (Fulcrum).⁷⁸ Russia's top of the line fighter which is going for the unheard of "sale" price of \$25 million instead of \$40 million as the former USSR desperately tries to get rid of surplus weaponry.⁷⁹ These formidable planes will augment the substantial stocks of Soviet aircraft inherited from the Iraqi Air Force for which Iran has obtained help from the former Soviet Union to keep them operational.⁸⁰ Iran is allegedly obtaining T-72s from cash-strapped Czechoslovakia as well as from Russia, which is also building the Iranians a T-72 tank production plant near Tehran,⁸¹ and is negotiating major deals with China, Brazil, and Argentina.⁸²

In the best of times, Iraq would view Iran's military build-up with worry. In its weakened state, it cannot but view it with a growing sense of alarm and paranoia for several reasons. (1) Iran is re-building its offensive conventional capability⁸³ which was dissipated in the bloody battles of 1987, and then wiped out in the Iraqi offensives of April-July of 1988. Iraq, which learned the value and effectiveness of offensive forces the hard way between 1986 and 1988, when it was forced to shift its thinking from a defensive mentality to an offensive one and to build up a relatively potent offensive combined arms force,⁸⁴ is currently

unable to refurbish its offensive or defensive capabilities because of the continuing arms embargo. (2) Iran is currently engaged in a major process of restructuring and reorganizing its military establishment. The Revolutionary Guards or pasdaran, which supplied Iran with the bulk of its infantry forces, and the regular army are being merged and will be under one joint chief of staff; this has been done to avoid the waste, corruption and duplication of resources that have existed since the onset of the Islamic Republic.⁸⁵ (3) Iran is also in the process of doctrinal change and engaging in new thinking about its style of warfare. Its defeat in 1988 by a better-equipped Iraq discredited its view that ideological and spiritual commitment and fervor are the major determinants in war. The Iraqi defeat in the Gulf War by a better-trained and technologically superior enemy reinforced the trend in Iranian defense thinking that professionalism, technical expertise, extensive training, and above all, technology, are of paramount importance in modern war; and that a truly effective military should achieve a synergistic relationship between the material and human elements.⁸⁶ (4) Iran is putting more emphasis on its arms industry, and according to Shahram Chubin, the country is not only capable of repairing and reverse-engineering its foreign weapons but is also capable of local production of a wide variety of arms.⁸⁷ It is also seeking joint production ventures with other Third World states such as Pakistan and Syria. At the same time, Iraq's arms production capabilities are being destroyed by the so-called UN Special Commission, which is now seeking to neutralize Iraqi industrial plants capable of both civilian and military uses. (5) Iran has a growing unconventional arms program which is designed to give the country an indigenous chemical arms and ballistic missile production capability, and it is alleged, nuclear arms. Iran vehemently denies the charges that it is seeking nuclear arms⁸⁸ but most countries, including Iraq(!),⁸⁹ do not accept Iran's denials at face value.

After Iraq put down the rebellions, attempts to defuse tensions and deal with bilateral issues such as the exchange of prisoners of the 1980-88 War, the return of Iraqi refugees, the return of the Iraqi planes which Iran has claimed as reparations, and the clearing of the Shatt al-Arab, remain deadlocked.⁹⁰

Relations with Turkey from bad to worse over the summer. Turkey was a strong supporter of the

coalition and allowed coalition warplanes to hit Iraq from Incirlik Air Base in southern Turkey. After the war, Iraqi Information Minister Hamid Yusuf Hammadi stated that Turkey had stabbed Iraq in the back and told a Turkish journalist, "Had we wanted to we could have hit Turkey during the war."⁹¹ But Iraq also made it clear that it wished to restore normal relations in the post-war era as the oil pipelines through Turkey currently remain that country's sole means to export oil. In Iraqi eyes, Turkey's post-war behavior which was characterized by unwarranted interference in Iraqi domestic affairs and infringement of sovereignty had made a bad situation worse. In March 1991, Turkish President Turgut Ozal met Iraqi Kurdish rebel leaders and after ascertaining that Iraq's Kurds were not intent on creating an independent Kurdistan and thus fragmenting Iraq (Turkey has its own acute problems with separatist Kurds, the Kurdish Workers Party or PKK) endorsed their demands for autonomy within a democratic Iraq. Turkey has sent planes and troops in raids across the border to attack guerilla bases of the Turkish Kurdish separatists. In revenge, Iraq has actively begun extending support to the PKK which it has succeeded in turning from a formerly ragged into a well-equipped force.

Iraq succumbed to hubris in 1990: Saddam had hoped to make Iraq rich beyond belief and infinitely more powerful by incorporating Kuwait. Then he had promised that the war for Kuwait would be the "mother of all battles" but it turned out to be the "mother of all defeats" for his country. The Iraqi leader, himself, reportedly compared the damage to Iraq with that wrought upon the country by the Mongol hordes of Hülegü in 1258, as indeed he might. The specter of fragmentation has receded, but in a short period of time, one of the most highly developed countries in the Middle East has been turned into a cripple with an attenuated sovereignty over its territory and limited regional and international roles.

Endnotes

1. For an assessment of the view that Iraq's belligerence is a function of both weakness and vulnerabilities and "bullying" mentality, see Jochen Hippler, "Iraq's Military Power: The German Connection," *Middle East Report* (January-February 1991): 27-28; and Ahmad Hashim, "The Strategic Culture of a Garrison State: Iraqi Views on Deterrence, Compellence and

War-Fighting vis-à-vis Israel, 1988-1991," in *Regional Security in the Middle East: Arab and Israeli Concepts of Deterrence and Defense*, ed. David Wurmser (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, forthcoming).

2. This is an adaptation from Stanley Hoffmann's theoretical argument in "Security in an Age of Turbulence: Means of Response," in *Third World Conflict and International Security*, Adelphi Papers, Part II, vol. 167, (London: IISS, 1981), 4-5.

3. On the state as a source of threat against its own people see Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, 2nd ed. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991), 35-56.

4. For very good discussions of the historical and contemporary origins of the Iraq-Kuwait crisis see Phebe Marr, "Iraq's Uncertain Future," *Current History* 90, no. 552 (January 1991); Walid Khalidi, "The Gulf Crisis: Origins and Consequences," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 20, no. 2 (Winter 1991); Henri Laurens, "Le Contentieux territorial entre l'Irak et Koweït," *Maghreb-Machrek* no. 130 (October-December 1990): 14-24; Benoit Parisot, "La situation économique et financière de l'Irak à la mi-1990: Quelle influence sur la décision d'envahir le Koweït?" *Maghreb-Machrek* no. 130 (October-December 1990): 36-44; Joe Stork and Ann M. Lesch, "Why War?" *Middle East Report*, November-December 1990, 11-18; David Butler, "Baghdad Flexes its Muscles," *Middle East Economic Digest*, 3 August 1990, 4-5; Liesl Graz, "Iraqi Sabres Rattle in the Gulf," *Middle East International*, 3 August 1990. For the Iraqi perception of threat as presented by Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz see, "Note from the Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Tariq Aziz, to the Secretary-General of the Arab League, 15 July 1990," in Pierre Salinger and Eric Laurent, *Secret Dossier: The Hidden Agenda Behind the Gulf War* (New York: Penguin Books, 1991), Appendix I, 223-234.

5. This is even admitted by detractors of the regime. See Michael Messing, "Can Saddam Survive?" *New York Review of Books*, 15 August 1991, 61.

6. On the trials and tribulations of the opposition, see *Washington Post*, 27 August 1990; *Christian Science Monitor*, 15 February 1991. For good in-depth analyses of the opposition in the last few years, see Ofra Bengio's chapters on Iraq in *Middle East Contemporary Survey*, (Boulder: Westview Press), 11 (1987), 437-444; 12 (1988), 519-525; 14 (1991), 35-36.

7. See *Washington Post*, 23 January 1991; the opposition's platform is detailed in Foreign Broadcasting and Information Service, *FBIS Daily Report: Near East and South Asia*, 2 January 1991, 31-33.

8. On Iran's role see David Halévy's convincing article in the *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 31 March 1991; *Washington Post*, 30 June 1991; *The Economist*, 27 April 1991.

9. For Iraq's view of Iran's role see further below.

10. On the government's counterattack see, *Washington Post*, 30 June 1991; Gerald Butt, "Iraqi Shiites: Abandoned and Betrayed," *Middle East International*, 3 May 1991. It is very significant that the greatest resistance to government forces was in Karbala and Najaf, two very poor rural and intensely religious towns where communism made inroads in the 1950s and early 1960s, and where Arab nationalism Baath style has not had great success.

11. On the rebellion in the Shia south, I relied extensively on the following: Antoine Jalkh, "L'Opposition irakienne dans tous les états," *Maghreb-Machrek*; Phebe Marr, "Iraq's Future: Plus Ça Change ... Or Something Better?" mimeo.; Pierre Martin, "Les chiites d'Irak de retour sur la scène politique," *Maghreb-Machrek*

no. 132 (April-June 1991); Peter Galbraith, "Civil War in Iraq: A Staff Report to the Committee on Foreign Relations," (US Senate: May 1991); and various articles by journalists in *Middle East International*, *Le Monde*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Washington Post*, and *Economist Intelligence Unit Country Report*, nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4 for Iraq 1991.

12. Among them are Frederick Axelgard, *A New Iraq?*, 25-29; Edmund Ghareeb, "Domestic Politics and Development in Iraq," in *Sources of Domestic and Foreign Policy in Iraq*, ed. Z. Michael Szaz, (Washington, DC: American Foreign Policy Institute, 1986), 27.

13. In Saddam's words, "hordes of rancorous traitors infiltrated from inside and outside the country to spread devastation, terror, sabotage and looting in a number of Iraq's southern cities and villages..." and were agents of foreigners; quoted in Edmund O'Sullivan, "Iraq's Days of Agony and Hope," *Middle East Economic Digest*, 5 April 1991, 4.

14. Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, *FBIS Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 9 August 1991, 17.

15. Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, *FBIS Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 9 August 1991, 18. For Iraq's interpretation of Iranian support for the uprising, see the section on regional security.

16. Gerald Butt, "Iraq: Ruthless Revenge," *Middle East International*, 5 April 1991, 4.

17. On the crushing of the Kurdish insurgency in 1988, see "Saddam Settles an Old Score," *The Middle East*, October 1988; Ahmad Shikara, "Prospects for Peace in Iraq: The Case of the Kurds and the Question of National Integration," in *After The War: Iraq, Iran and the Arab Gulf*, ed. Charles Davies (Chichester, England: Carden Publishers, 1990), 97-116.

18. See Vahe Petrossian, "Iraq: The Kurdish Reaction to the Gulf Crisis," *Middle East Economic Digest*, 30 November 1990, 13.

19. See *Le Monde*, 6 April 1991.

20. See *Le Monde*, 4 and 5 April 1991.

21. Quoted in *Christian Science Monitor*, 6 May 1991.

22. *Christian Science Monitor*, 6 May 1991. This *Christian Science Monitor* report by Jim Muir is an excellent analysis of the reasons behind the failure of the Kurdish revolt as seen by the Kurds themselves. See also "Guess Who's Still Running Iraq," *The Economist*, 6 April 1991, 39-40.

23. Clyde Haberman, "The Kurds in Flight Once Again," *New York Times Magazine*, 5 May 1991, 52.

24. *Washington Post*, 2 May 1991.

25. *Washington Post*, 3 May 1991; *Sunday Times (London)*, 28 April 1991.

26. See Jalal Talabani on the obstacles in Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, *FBIS Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 23 September 1991, 38-40.

27. Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, *FBIS Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 23 September 1991, 40-41; see also *Economist Intelligence Unit Country Report: Iraq*, no. 4, 1991, 8-9. Masoud Barzani's reluctance to rely on foreign guarantees may stem from his father's unfortunate experience between the 1940s and 1970s when foreign support for his various insurgencies proved disastrous for the Kurds.

28. For an example of Baghdad's attacks on Talabani see the summary of a *Babil* article (*Babil* is the newspaper of Uday Husain, Saddam's oldest son) in *Mideast Mirror*, 9 October 1991.

18. The government's suspicions concerning Talabani's agenda are not misplaced: in 1988, he stated that "the question is no

longer whether we will have our own republic, but whether that republic will be an equal member in a confederal set-up within Iraq (i.e. the now discredited Yugoslav model) or whether it will go its own way." Quoted in Hazhir Temourian, "Now Is the Time to Strike," *The Middle East*, April 1988, 22. This article also details the extent of Talabani's foreign links. Later that same year, the PUK leader made very clear what he would like to see happen to Iraq and, of course, the Sunni Arabs in the center:

Iraq under Saddam Hussein has no long-term future; he is kept in power mainly by the superpowers plus his control of the army and the fear of the Arab-Sunni minority - who are neither Kurds nor Shia - that the country would come under the control of interests different from their own. He benefits too from a divided opposition. Iraq is not a nation: it is a fabrication of the British. It can be split into three parts with Kurdistan in the north, and the Shia in the south."

Quoted in Ahmad Shikara, "Prospects for Peace in Iraq: The Case of the Kurds and the Question of National Integration," in *After the War: Iraq, Iran and the Arab Gulf*, ed. Charles Davis (Chichester: Carden Publishers, 1990), 103 (emphasis added).

29. *Washington Post*, 19 February 1992.

30. Neither Iran nor Turkey are comfortable with the emerging Kurdish entity in northern Iraq, where the central government has little or no authority.

31. *Washington Post*, 19 February 1992.

32. *Washington Post*, 19 February 1992.

33. Of course one could argue that Baghdad's incredibly harsh and repressive policies toward the Kurds (razing villages, resettling Kurds in the interior in easily accessible townships or even in the far south, indiscriminate war, and use of chemical weapons) have alienated the latter even more over the years, particularly between 1988-1990. Baghdad's answer to that would be the "extraordinary measures" would not have been taken if the Kurds did not continually betray their country, especially in times of war. On the other hand, there may be many reasons why such an interpretation may be inaccurate. (1) The possible loss of Iraqi territory would not be countenanced by the ruling elite, especially the military, not only because it sees itself as the ultimate protector of Iraqi territorial integrity, but because the country which lacks strategic depth would become even more vulnerable. (2) It goes against the grain of Baathist and nationalist ideology to see the further loss of Arab lands to non-Arabs (i.e. Jews took over Palestine and turned it into Israel, and now they have occupied Arab territories since 1967; Turks with French connivance took the Sanjak of Alexandretta from Syria; and Iran absorbed "Arabistan" in the 1930s and re-named it Khuzistan). (3) It may result in a power vacuum in the north, as the Kurds prove themselves unable to set up a viable entity. The power vacuum could be exploited by the Turks and Iranians. (4) It could set the stage for the ultimate national security threat, the complete fragmentation of Iraq, which Baghdad sees as its enemies' goal (especially Iran and Israel). (5) Paradoxically, the Kurds themselves may be sincere in their claims that they do not want independence but a meaningful share of resources and genuine participation in the government. Whether this can be done by negotiation with the current regime structure (with or without Saddam) or needs to await a new government structure in Baghdad is one of the root causes of current Kurdish squabbling. There is one fact the Kurds are very cognizant of: they, themselves, can never be the political option for the whole of Iraq.

34. This coalition strategy is extensively examined in an article by Barton Gellman in *Washington Post*, 23 June 1991; see also

New York Times, 2 June 1991, and *Facts on File*, 6 June 1991, 416-417.

35. *International Herald Tribune*, 25 June 1991; *Wall Street Journal*, 15 July 1991.

36. Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, *FBIS Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 29 April 1991, 16.

37. For an interesting but not profoundly analytical survey of the Takriti saga and family politics over the last decade or so, see Simon Henderson, *Instant Empire: Saddam Hussein's Ambitions for Iraq* (San Francisco: Mercury House), 80-91; the best description of the Takriti rise to power and riches is to be found in the classic study of Iraqi politics by Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Baathists and Free Officers* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 1079-1093.

38. See *The Guardian*, 14 August 1990; *Washington Post*, 4 December 1991.

39. On the decline in the prestige and power of the Baath party since the Gulf War, see *Washington Post*, 16 July 1991; for Saddam's scathing critique of the behavior of party officials during the insurgency in the south, see Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, *FBIS Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 3 May and 27 June 1991, 13-14 and 14-17 respectively.

40. Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, *FBIS Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 18 September 1991, 31.

41. See Phebe Marr, "Iraq's Future: Plus Ça Change ... Or Something Better?" mimeo., 20.

42. On this concept, see David Hirst in *The Guardian*, 14 January 1990; and Philip, "Middle East I: The Arabs Eye Eastern Europe Warily," *World Today*, August-September 1990.

43. This section relied on excellent first-hand observations of the situation in Iraq in summer and fall 1991 by Trudy Rubin of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*; Tony Horwitz of the *Wall Street Journal*; Lamis Andoni of *Christian Science Monitor* and *Jordan Times*; and Françoise Chipaux of *Le Monde*.

44. See *Washington Post*, 4 May 1991 and *Le Monde*, 27 July 1991.

45. *Financial Times*, 4 March 1991.

46. This is based extensively on "Iraqi Reconstruction Fraught with Difficulties," *MidEast Report* 24, no. 9 (5 May 1991).

47. *Washington Post*, 6 May 1991.

48. On Iraq's 1988-1990 plans for a "lean-mean mobile machine," see Jean Dabaghy, "Irak: Amers l'endemain de Victoire," *Arabies*, no. 39 (March 1990): 33-35; Stephen Pelletiere and others, *Iraqi Power and US Security in the Middle East* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 1990), 48-51.

49. See *Financial Times*, 1 March 1991 and *Le Monde*, 3-4 March 1991.

50. This task was left to the Iraqi Army Aviation Corps formed in 1983, which proved itself during the Iran-Iraq War by providing timely and effective close air support to Iraqi defensive and offensive operations.

51. Quoted in Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, *FBIS Middle East and Africa: Daily Report*, 5 January 1987, E5.

52. The section on the restructuring of the armed forces is based on *Financial Times*, 1 March 1991; a comparison of inventories contained in *Military Balance* (International Institute of Strategic Studies, 1990-91 and 1991-92); Ehud Ya'ari, "Iraq's New Order of Battle," *Jerusalem Report*, 4 July 1991; Michael Eisenstadt, "The Iraqi Military Since the War," mimeo., 1991; and various

statements of new Defense Minister Ali Hasan al-Majid on the new tasks of the Iraqi army.

53. On MIMI, see Jonathan Crusoe, "Iraq," *Middle East Economic Digest (Profile)*, February 1989, 47.

54. See *Al Tadamun* (Arabic), 15 May 1989.

55. Saddam Husain has expounded at length on this, see Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, *FBIS Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 17 July 1991, 21-23. At first sight, it seems curious that one of these threats, Iran, is perceived as an instrument of the threats posed by the other groups, not only a threat in and of itself. Iraq's other enemies used Iran as the instrument of the first aggression, meaning the Iran-Iraq War of 1980-88, but Iraq defeated this conspiracy in 1988.

56. The Iraqi Baathists generally believe that Britain is incapable or unwilling to act in opposition to American policies; this contrasts with France's traditionally more independent approach.

57. For excellent analyses of the origins of the Franco-Iraqi politico-military relationship, see Gregory Nowell, "France and the Persian Gulf, mimeo., (Boston: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1980); and "Iraq and the French Connection," mimeo., (Boston: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1980); see also "The New French Stake in Iraq," *The Middle East*, 1983, 8-9.

58. See Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, *FBIS Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 29 April 1991, 16.

59. Quoted in *Washington Post*, 17 March 1991.

60. Quoted in *Middle East Economic Survey* 34, no. 32, C1.

61. See Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, *FBIS Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 20 and 21 August 1991.

62. Egypt's concerns about Iraq's military power are addressed in *Christian Science Monitor*, 9 April 1991. For an early and alarmist assessment by Egyptian officers, see Kamal Tohmé, "Arabie Saoudite, Turquie, Iran: Le Triangle de l'Equilibre," *Arabies*, no. 51 (March 1991): 24-25.

63. See "Saudi Arabia: The New Gulf Cop?" *Issues: Perspectives on Middle East and World Affairs* 1, no. 4 (January 1992): 6-7.

64. For an excellent analysis of Iran's response to the Kuwait crisis, see Shahram Chubin, "Iran and the Gulf Crisis," *Middle-East Insight* 7, no. 4 (December 1990): 30-35.

65. *Christian Science Monitor*, 5 February 1991.

66. *Christian Science Monitor*, 5 February 1991.

67. *Christian Science Monitor*, 5 February 1991. It is quite plausible that there may have been prior coordination between the Iraqi and Iranian governments over the planes, but Iran expressed its "displeasure" in order to maintain neutrality. Whatever interpretation is correct is merely academic now, since Iran has decided to keep the planes.

68. *Christian Science Monitor*, 5 February 1991.

69. There was also the added bonus of the Iraqi warplanes, the return of Iranian territories under occupation by Iraqi forces, the dropping of Iraqi claims to the unilateral ownership of the Shat al-Arab. For a similar assessment, see Walid Khalidi, *The Middle East Postwar Environment* (Washington, DC: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1991), 17-18.

70. Quoted in Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, *FBIS Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 29 July 1991, 24.

71. Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, *FBIS Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 20 March 1991, 18.

72. The other members of the conspiracy were the Western countries, the Zionists, and now the reactionary Arab states.

73. Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, *FBIS Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 18 March 1991, 28.

74. In the case of Tajikistan, the links are also ethnic, as the inhabitants of that new republic are of Iranian stock.

75. Edmund O'Sullivan, "The Uncertain Road to Peace in the Region," *Middle East Economic Digest, Special Report on Defense*.

76. See Anoushiravan Ehteshami, "Iran's Revolution: Fewer Ploughshares, more swords," *Army Defence Quarterly Journal* 20, no. 1; "Iran's Arms Needs Assessed," *Mideast Markets* 16, no. 3 (6 February 1989): 11-12.

77. On Iran's alleged and actual purchases, see *Los Angeles Times*, 7 January 1992; *Middle East International*, 12 July 1991, 14; "Iran: Regional Power?" *Issues: Middle East and World Affairs* 1, no. 4 (January 1992): 4; *Washington Post*, 2 February 1992. On the increased press coverage of Iran's nuclear weapons program, see Safa Haeri, "Iran: Thwarted Nuclear Deals," *Middle East International*, 22 November 1991, 13; *Los Angeles Times*, 27 January 1991; *Washington Post*, 26 June, 30 and 31 October 1991.

78. It may also be seeking the more advanced MiG-31.

79. *Financial Times*, 15 January 1992.

80. See *Issues: Perspectives on Middle Eastern and World Affairs* 1, no. 2 (November 1991): 7.

81. *Washington Post*, 5 February 1992.

82. *Issues: Perspective on Middle Eastern and World Affairs* 1, no. 4 (January 1992): 4.

83. Offensive capabilities are those weapons systems such as combat planes, tanks, ballistic missiles, and armored fighting vehicles, which enhance a country's ability to project power beyond its borders and which are inherently destabilizing. See W. Seth Carus, "Weapons Technology And Regional Stability," in Shelley Stahl and Geoffrey Kemp, *Arms Control and Weapons Proliferation in the Middle East and South Asia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 9-16. The 1991-92 *Military Balance* shows an Iranian order-of-battle relatively unchanged from the figures given for the 1989-90 and 1990-91 *Military Balance*: under 700 tanks, a total of 700-800 armored personnel carriers and fighting vehicles, and under 150 self-propelled artillery pieces. This means the Iranian military suffers from *low mobility* and has little *offensive capability*. It must be assumed that the new purchases have not, as of yet, been integrated into the Iranian order-of-battle. Thus, they represent *putative* rather than *actual* power.

84. On the defensive orientation of the Iraqi armed forces between 1982-1986, see John Devlin, "Iraqi Military Policy: From Assertiveness to Defense," in *Gulf Security and the Iran-Iraq War*, ed. Thomas Naff (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 1985), 129-156. On the Iraqi decision to build an offensive-oriented strategy, and on vastly improved offensive operational capability partly as a result of better training, greater operational freedom granted to the high command, an inevitable process of learning the "tricks" of combined arms warfare, and improved command and control especially within the Republican Guards and the regular army's armored and mechanized forces, see Stephen Pelletiere and others, *Iraqi Power and US Security in the Middle East* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 1990), 9-40; and Stephen Pelletiere *Lessons Learned: The Iran-Iraq War* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: US Army War College, 1991), 7-63; Ahmed Hashim, "Third World War: The Iraq-Iran Conflict in Historical, Political and Military Perspective," unpublished dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

1991, Chapter 11.

85. See Shahram Chubin, "Iran and the Lessons of the War with Iraq: Implications for Future Defense Policies," in *Arms Control and Weapons Proliferation*, Shelley Stahl and Geoffrey Kemp, 106-107; Safa Haeri, "Iran: Forces Combined," *Middle East International*, 7 February 1992. It has been pointed out that a country's ability to improve its command and control systems is a destabilizing factor: see W. Seth Carus, "Weapons Technology and Regional Stability," 10.

86. For an excellent and detailed analysis of changes in Iranian defense thinking occasioned by both the Iran-Iraq and Gulf Wars, see Shahram Chubin, "Iran and the Lessons of the Gulf War," mimeo., (Los Alamos National Laboratory: Center for National Security Studies, n.d.).

87. Shahram Chubin, "Iran and the Lessons of the War with Iraq," 107.

88. For first-vice president Hasan Habibi's denials, see *Tehran Times*, 18 June 1991.

89. See *Al-Thawrah*, 10 July 1991 concerning Iraqi fears of Iran's re-armament.

90. See *Mideast Mirror*, 27 August 1991; Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, *FBIS Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 16 April 1991, 30 August 1991; *Iran Focus* 4, nos. 5 and 7 (July 1991).

91. Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, *FBIS Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 16 May 1991.

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Political Environment in Iraq: Prospects for Change

Christine M. Helms

... there are some Baghdadis old enough to recall the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire; occupation by British forces during World War I; creation of an entity called Iraq after the war and British installation as "king" of the Al Hashim family who had formerly resided in al-Hijaz on the Red Sea coast; independence of the state in 1932; a revolution in 1958 that irrevocably ended foreign-imposed Hashimite rule and subsequent nationalization of their strategic resources; three successive military dictatorships in a decade; another revolution in 1968 which secured the rule of civilian, secular Arab national Baathists; a debilitating conflict in the mid-1970s between the state and Kurdish guerrillas who were supported by Iran and the United States; a costly nine-year war with Iran begun in 1980 in which Ayatollah Khomeini often reiterated his intention to bring southern Iraq under Persian Shia control and establish an Islamic government in Baghdad;¹ Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990; the ejection of Iraqi forces from Kuwait in 1991 by an international coalition during which major damage was inflicted on Iraq's military and civilian infrastructure and an estimated 100,000 to 200,000 Iraqis died; subsequent ethnic and religious uprisings which caused tens of thousands more Iraqi deaths; and the continuation in 1992 of an economic embargo imposed on Iraq in 1990.

These events, all of which pertain to Iraqi national identity, occurred in less than 80 years. Prior to this, "Iraq" was a vast dynamic frontier in which diverse cultural groups such as Arabs, Persians, Kurds, and Turks intermixed. Their legacy is modern Iraq's pluralism, which has been both bane and asset to successive Iraqi governments. In short, the answer

to the assigned topic "Prospects for Change in Iraq" is simple: chances are good! Watch this space daily!

Now, for the bad news!

Many Washington policy pundits, viewing the Middle East through the twin lenses of military victory in the recent Gulf War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, have a limited notion of change. Today, for example, this author was specifically asked to assess Iraq's current political situation, the strength of Iraq's leadership and its prospect for change, and the significance of outside forces, namely, economic sanctions, in molding Iraq's public opinion.

At the heart of these topics is a central premise: peace, security, and predictability will return to the Middle East once Saddam Husain is ousted. From this, other assumptions have grown. Democratization, an inevitable process, will lead to pro-American governments. Iraq, no longer a pariah nation, will be a responsible player. Allies will remain allies. "Difficult regimes," grasping the wisdom of being on the "winning team," will deny radical elements comfort and safe haven and bestow upon their minorities "a meaningful voice." Intra-Arab and extra-regional problems will be resolved by evolving democratic mechanisms or, failing that, Western powers whose future prestige and capacity to influence regional events is never questioned. In this equation, Iran is portrayed as a "moderate" party with benign intent; and, scarcity of resources, environmental degradation, and population growth rarely, if ever figure.

Currency of the central premise is everywhere apparent. We are daily bombarded by rumors about American covert programs aiding Iraqi opposition groups or military plans for either overthrowing Saddam or sending him "an air express message." Whether they are true matters little here. President Bush has stated openly and often that he wants Saddam gone. He has also called on Iraq's military

and people to resolve the affair, indicating that relations with the US would improve were they successful. Providing further incentive, the US has been the leading proponent to continue sanctions against Iraq begun in August 1990 unless Iraq complies fully with UN ceasefire conditions, which include the monitoring of weapons and restrictions on future oil sales.² Banning Iraq's atomic program and overseeing future scientific imports, the US also wants factories formerly used for weapons production destroyed even if they can be converted to peaceful use. And, Iraqi opposition figures, wherever they derive aid, now move openly between Iran, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Turkey. The take-home message for Iraqis clearly is that as long as Saddam remains, Iraq's sovereignty and economic well-being will be compromised.

Whether the central premise is correct is debatable. Four caveats about the direction of change in the Middle East, however, are not. First, when Saddam dies, is killed, or ousted, change within Iraq will not be orderly. As Iraqis celebrate, like they have at the passing of all Iraqi leaders, they will harbor fear. Fear of neighboring Iraqi communities. Fear of adjacent states. Fear that America's aim was not Saddam's overthrow, but Iraq's destruction.

Second, Saddam's passing may well lead to turbulent, uncontrolled regional forces that cannot be contained for a simple reason. Iraq is not an isolated entity, but is embedded within a regional dynamic. Iraq and 20 other political entities, for example, profess adherence both to Arabism and Islam. Islam and Arabism have competed and coexisted as political paradigms for 1300 years, crossing frontiers, regions and, during this century, national borders. Iraq also shares sectarian groups with two non-Arab neighboring states, Turkey and Iran, which also happen to be Islamic. Not only have some groups sought greater political autonomy, but they also have been used as pawns in larger games by both outside powers and regional states.

Middle Eastern political pundits have a notion of change no less limited than their Western counterparts. Most see themselves as weak, passive observers of "conspiracies" daily perpetrated by the US or a regional ally. America's success is attributed not so much to democracy as capitalism. Capitalism is viewed as the rational, relentless, and selfish pursuit of interests which in the Middle East are the preservation of Israel and access to oil for America.

Indeed, these pundits argue, capitalism's logical conclusion is the separation of church and state. The elevation of personal self-interest is above that of the community. Therefore, they console themselves, American policy is at least predictable. Arab and Islamic states will be prevented from achieving technological parity, and their unity will be fragmented except where, as in the case of the Gulf Cooperation Council, it is self-serving.

Rhetorical proofs are daily asked in the Arabic press. America was unwilling to impose, as an omnipotent superpower should be able to do, a fair resolution to the Palestinian issue. And, what about its support for "democratic, legitimate" governments? Didn't America realize its Gulf War allies were hereditary, socially reactionary governments? Didn't America oppose Khomeini's popular rise to power in Iran? Didn't it initially approve of Algeria's military move against Islamic activists who actually had won the first round of free parliamentary elections? And, what of Jordan, the only Arab nation besides Algeria to hold free elections? Jordan was forced "to commit suicide" during the Gulf crisis. Perhaps, as Israel wants, it will become "the Palestinian solution?"

Claims by American officials and the media that Iran's Islamic activism was contained in 1989 (in large part due to Iraq) and that Arab radicalism was eliminated with Iraq's devastation in 1991 have proven premature. Arab radicals have new sponsors, and Islam enjoys a resurgence from North Africa through Pakistan. Algeria "contained" its Islamic problem by arresting 6,000 alleged activists in February 1992. Thousands of new Islamic "radicals" are reported in the lower Arab Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia. Even the Palestinian uprising has seen a dramatic increase of Islamic activists.³

The ire of Islamic activists is not directed against Saddam, but Israel,⁴ the United States for supporting Israel and the recent military presence which led to Iraq's devastation, and their own governments for, among other things, failure to broaden political participation, pandering to foreign interests, and corruption.

To this regional dynamic, virtually all regional states, including America's allies, are beset by traumas that existed prior to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Consider the following factors and trends which threaten state stability and increase prospects for regional conflict:

Within two decades, the Arab population of the Middle East will double from 250 million to 500 million. Iran's 55 million will double to 110 million by 2006.

These populations, already young with 70 percent under 20 years, are getting younger.

A basic discrepancy exists between "have" and "have not" states. *Per capita* income in the six Arab oil-producing states of the Gulf (whose combined population is only 18 million), is \$15,000. This contrasts with an estimated \$750 in Morocco (population 25 million), \$690 in Egypt (55 million), and \$310 in Sudan (23 million).

This discrepancy is growing with staggering rates of inflation (many over 50 percent), increasingly higher rates of unemployment, and illiteracy (measured at 40 percent in urban and 60 percent in many rural areas). Further, more than 3 million Arab workers and their dependents returned during the Gulf crisis to North Africa, Yemen, and Jordan. Tourism, a growing source of income for many in recent years, declined sharply.

Poverty invites extremism. United States officials predict the Sudan, where more than 7 out of 23 million people are at risk of starvation this year, will be the next center for terrorism. It reportedly received \$10-20 million recently from Iran and in early 1992 hosted Iranian President Rafsanjani. At the same time, more than 400,000 mainly Christian and animist squatters living outside Khartoum have been forced into barren desert and, according to one international aid official, "certain death."

Population growth and development accelerates the use of scarce resources. Development alone increases energy demand by four to six percent annually. Water already is a sensitive, potentially explosive issue. There are only three major rivers (Nile, Tigris, and Euphrates) in a region where rainfall is often scarce to nonexistent. Population concentrations place further constraints on water usage. For example, more than 95 percent of Egypt's population, increasing by one million persons every eight to ten months, is concentrated on less than five percent of its land area.

Population growth and increased migration from rural to urban areas overstretches state resources. Foreign subsidies will become increasingly scarce with increased global demand. Aid from Arab oil producers to fellow Arab states, for example, declined from a high of \$9.5 billion in 1980 to \$1.5 billion in 1989, according to the Congressional Research Service. Following the Gulf War, Arab donors have indicated aid will drop further, although a ten year \$10 billion aid package was approved in April 1991 for distribution primarily to Egypt and Syria.

Political succession in all Arab states, including hereditary regimes, remains uncertain.

Arab oil-producers confront different problems. Financial institutions are exceedingly fragile, as the Suq al-Manakh and BCCI scandals illustrate; more than 98 percent of their GNPs derive from oil; there have been few attempts to develop human capital and diversify dependence; and some oil producers will become oil importers during the next two decades.

The composition of military personnel in some countries is also changing with unforeseen consequences. In Kuwait, *badu* and foreign troops are being replaced by middle class urban Kuwaitis. And, in the lower Gulf states, officers have achieved higher levels of education and expertise than ruling families.

Further, a number of these problems have been exacerbated by the war. According to one economist, for example, the war cost the Arab world \$438 billion, triple the region's debt.⁵ Jordan was seriously compromised by the return of overseas workers, loss of tourism, the cutoff of its oil supply, soaring inflation, and unemployment that reached 40 percent. The few states which reaped serious financial benefit, Egypt and Syria, turned around and reinvested in military purchases. Old rivalries are now more blatant than ever. Chief among these is the Saudi Arabian Arab Sunni versus Iranian Persian Shia views of Islam and of regional order.

Finally, the Middle East exists within a global community of nations in which influence is exerted in both directions. Although Washington politicians now refer to this global community as the New World Order, it is characterized for a vast majority

by moral ambiguity, conflicting interests, and economic travail. It is significant, for example, that even the moral certitude of the international coalition against Iraq no longer exists. Saudi Arabia could not wait to speed the departure of coalition forces from its soil and has to date refused to stockpile even one division of US military equipment unless it acts as guarantor. Of the 25,000 American troops remaining in the region in early 1992, notably 18,000 were on ships and several thousand more in Turkey.

Further, many American allies found cooperation palatable precisely because the coalition's stated aim was narrowly focused on one objective: freeing Kuwait from Iraqi occupation. Support for continuing sanctions against Iraq stem from other reasons: Saddam's intransigence with regard to the UN ceasefire agreement, concern about arms control, a reluctance to irritate the US until it pays an outstanding UN bill of more than \$700 million, and a hope by some that other US carrots may yet be dispersed for good behavior. To what extent can an American administration forge similar unanimity to oust Saddam, and, if it acts alone, what will be regional and global ramifications?⁶

Prospects for Change in Iraq: Is There a Credible Opposition?

This said, "Will Saddam be ousted?"

Maybe. Probably. But, then again, who knows?

Americans find this incomprehensible. They aver Saddam as responsible during the war for untold Iraqi deaths,⁷ human suffering, and extensive damage to Iraq's infrastructure, including bridges, and electrical, water, phone, and sewage systems.⁸ Given current US policy, they say, his survival ensures Iraq is marginalized in regional affairs, has no leverage on sanctions, and daily incurs economic erosion.

Saddam, however, owes his survival to a variety of factors. His personality and control over the state apparatus are clearly important. And, in the aftermath of war, the Iraqi military was forced to quell uprisings to protect the territorial integrity of the state and deter further intervention from the US and Iran. One Arab ambassador also suggested to me that "Officers were probably afraid to make a martyr of him." And, indeed, Saddam did make a suggestive statement after the war: "What option did

we have except to sit there and take it?"

However, the most plausible reason for Saddam's survival is simply pluralism. It is, ironically, both Saddam's Achilles heel and his savior. Every successful Iraqi government past and present has been confronted with two dilemmas: building good relations among its diverse ethnic, religious, linguistic, and regional communities and with neighboring states who have members of these same communities.⁹ Earlier military regimes overcame pluralism because power was based on coercive force. Baathists dealt with pluralism by emphasizing the civilian nature of the party, aiming recruitment at the young, and stressing "Iraqi identity" as opposed to disparate, conflicting communal affiliations.

Whoever aspires to remove Saddam must not only strike him and his inner circle but must also suppress "adventurist" activities from Iraq's many communities and deter meddling from outside groups, especially Iran. Anyone ignoring this fundamental element in Iraqi politics has done so at his peril. Uprisings in Iraq's Shia south and Kurdish north after the war clearly illustrate the dangers of this Pandora's box. They were not coordinated uprisings. Each group acted out its own historical frustrations. They struck at soft targets: members of the Baath party, police representing the Iraqi state, and fellow members of the Iraqi military.

Saddam himself has been and continues to be openly leery of pluralism as his September 1991 announcement that opposition parties could form clearly shows. To qualify, all parties must defend Iraq's sovereignty and unity and respect the revolutions of 1958 and 1968. Further, parties cannot be based on race, regionalism, sectarian interests, atheism, or an anti-Arab platform. Religious parties are allowed only if they are not sectarian-based. As always, parties are forbidden in the armed services.

There are essentially three groups who could dispatch Saddam, contain dissent, and either promote or obtain a base of support across Iraq's pluralistic society.

1. The military for obvious reasons is best situated to strike Saddam and maintain power. A military coup would also allow a coup leader from becoming too easily and quickly targeted by opposition groups. There are also many well-known

and respected officers. For these reasons, however, the military is constantly monitored for signs of disloyalty.

2. Relatives and an inner circle have ready access to Saddam. Notably, neither has "true" Baathist credentials. And, lacking other power bases, they are well motivated to protect Saddam. This is especially true of the inner circle. Relatives, on the whole, are not highly regarded. For example, Husain Kamal Hasan, Saddam's son-in-law, is resented within the military for his summary appointment as a lieutenant general. Under certain circumstances, however, hard-line cousin Ali Hasan al-Majid may have the wherewithal of the military if the Kurdish or economic situation worsens.

3. Baathists, including former members of the Revolutionary Command Council who have been shunted aside recently, potentially have access and a power base. There may also be as yet unknown mid-level Baathists, just like Saddam was earlier, who are running covert groups within the party. Both "old-timers" and unknowns may be able to garner support from the military, technocrats, "minority" groups, and other Baath factions. Notably, there have been Baathists in the not too distant past who have been pro-Syrian and, incredibly, some advocating Islamic activism.

Opposition groups outside Iraq are the least credible and most dangerous precisely because they are a tapestry reflecting Iraqi pluralism. Examples include Kurds, ex-Baathists, ex-military officers, Arab nationalists, former Communists, and Arab Sunni as well as Persian Shia fundamentalists. Many have made not only a career, but a livelihood out of opposition. Some, exiled for decades, have little understanding of recent Iraqi events, almost no internal support, and may well be perceived as aiding in Iraq's devastation during the war. Sunni Arab General Ibrahim Daoud, who has been exiled since 1968 and supported by Saudi Arabia during the Gulf crisis, is an example. Many other groups are discredited because they were Communists, supported Iran during the Iran-Iraq war, or received funding from foreign states like the Soviet Union, Iran, and Syria.

Indeed, the divisive nature of these groups is evident in the name the Group of 17, the most well known opposition coalition. Founded notably in

rival Damascus in December 1990, it includes Kurdish and Shia parties, Communists, and Arab nationalists. Various Kurdish groups are united as the Iraqi Kurdish Front.¹⁰ Shia parties are united as the Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI), which receives Iranian support and participated in the Basra uprisings. They may also be linked to several recent bombings.

Primarily bound by their hatred for Saddam, it is unlikely these groups can form an Iraqi government with concerted domestic and foreign policies and remain sufficiently united to establish a government capable of protecting Iraq's diverse groups.¹¹ There is a long historical antipathy between the Muslims and Communists; mainstream Shia and Islamic radicals advocating terrorism; Arab Shia who are suspicious of Persian Shia groups oriented toward Iran.

Kurds themselves are sub-divided as tribes, speaking different Kurdish dialects and languages (Arabic, Turkish, Iranian), and respecting different leaders. Several Kurdish leaders have already suggested that Iraq should be allowed to fragment into several ethnic states.

Furthermore, even their unity about hating Saddam is in doubt. When the post-war uprisings failed, Kurds accepted Saddam's post-war offer to negotiate an autonomy pact, casting aside a pledge by members of the Group of 17 not to seek separate accommodations with Baghdad. Several Kurdish chieftains, notably Jalal Talabani and Masoud Barzani, leaders respectively of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and the Kurdish Democratic Party, later admitted that Kurdish groups could not agree.

Opposition groups outside Iraq present multiple dangers to Iraq, the region, and even US interests. One is the ever-ready willingness of some sectarian groups to seek political advantage at the expense of other such groups. Even during the past year, Iraq's Kurdish guerrillas, who claim to have more than 150,000 men under arms, forced thousands of Christian Assyrians to leave their homes on forced marches toward the north.¹² Then, beginning the trek back home under UN protection, Kurds found themselves robbed by Kurdish guerrillas. And, in an astonishing display of what might lie ahead, Kurdish guerrillas systematically shot and killed at point blank range at least 60 Iraqi police officers who had surrendered their weapons at Sulaimaniya on 7 October 1991.

Another danger is that the Kurds, using the geographic concentration of their numbers and enhanced post-war media access, could establish permanent region-wide instability.¹³ This raises a number of serious issues. First, if present conditions in Kurdistan are illustrative, Kurds themselves could break down into regional, conflicting alliances. Second, the ability and desire of the present Kurdish guerrilla leaders to protect other minorities is seriously in doubt. Third, Iraq's resources would suffer "compartmentalization."

If northern Iraq were to dam the waters of the Tigris, this would seriously affect the economic well-being, even the life, of southern Iraq. It also could impel Iranian intervention. Indeed, it should be noted that very little serious analysis has been given to the viability of a land-locked Kurdish state. From an international perspective, the sub-division of Iraq's valuable oil reserves would also ensure a higher lifting price for its crude.

Fourth, fragmentation of Iraq could lead to wider regional instabilities. Indeed, this is already happening. Since August 1991, Turkey has engaged in sporadic aerial and artillery bombardment of a region six miles inside Iraq, where it is believed Turkish Kurds are sharing bases with Iraqi Kurds. Turkish ground forces are expected to occupy a three mile wide zone along the 206 mile Turkish-Iraqi border which they are currently mining. In addition to 65,000 troops, Turkey has stationed 30,000 police along the Turkish-Iraqi border.

Claims by Turkish officials that Iraq was inciting Kurdish guerrilla activity are plausible, but so are other scenarios. Turkey has for years regarded its so-called "mountain Turks," who until this past year were not even allowed to speak Kurdish publicly, an embarrassment and have been more than willing to accuse others for inciting instability. Indeed, the Iraqi military itself has had difficulty controlling, let alone reaching, these areas after the war. And, as always in this dispute, there are parties such as Syria with sufficient motive and wherewithal to influence events. Reports by the Western media and government officials must remain for the moment suspect as many of the former have become "true believers" in Kurdish nationalism, and the latter have obvious motives for distorting daily media pablum.

Saddam Husain in the Post-War Period

Amid this vortex of opposition and general public bitterness, Saddam survives. In this, he is not without experience, having survived nearly 25 years as a bureaucrat and politician within the highly-organized Baath party and in the tough, turbulent world of Iraqi politics generally. And he has employed a variety of techniques other than repressive measures. During the 1970s, he was responsible for diversifying Iraq's arms purchases, negotiating an agreement with the Kurds and later with the Iranian Shah. Development programs, controls on corruption, and a generalized distribution of oil wealth also enhanced his reputation at that time. During the Iran-Iraq war, he was accused of grievous miscalculations during Iraq's military reverses in 1982-83. But, falling back on an old maxim to "diversify risk by maximizing dependence," he sent a Baathist to Washington to alleviate Iraq's diplomatic isolation, upgraded and diversified Iraq's oil export routes, and granted greater authority to the military. Many Iraqis eventually called the war inevitable and, when Iraqi troops forced Khomeini to accept the "poisoned chalice" of peace, said: "We could never have won the war without him. Or, someone like him."

Despite Iraq's military defeat, Saddam's post-war actions give insight into his personality. Refusing to give up, he transformed himself into a complete dictator, appointed a new cabinet, and placed relatives in all key intelligence and defence positions.¹⁴ Prominent Baathists, such as Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz were shifted laterally while others, notably Information Minister Abd al-Latif Jasim, are essentially fired. The sole exception is Saadoun Hammadi, a respected Shia technocrat and bureaucrat, who was appointed Prime Minister.¹⁵

Saddam also bought time. During his first post-war address on 26 February 1991, he talked about liberalizing the political system. Nobody believed him, but that is irrelevant. He has demonstrated that he is still alive, and encoded in his speech was a warning to Iraqis not to interfere in sectarian politics.

He also lured the Kurds to Baghdad to discuss an autonomy pact and, for a while, divided Iraq's opposition in Damascus and the Kurds themselves. Then he sat back and watched the pot boil. As

expected, talks broke down in June 1991. At issue between Iraq and the Kurds were the status of Kirkuk and its oil resources, questions about the territorial integrity and political unity of the state, general security arrangements, free media, amnesty, and relations between a central government and the outlying Kurdish areas. There are also reportedly multiple issues disputed among the Kurds themselves.

In the period that followed, Kurdish guerrillas launched numerous assaults against the Iraqi military and state institutions. The Iraqi military responded by establishing a defensive line generally along the southern limits of the predominantly Kurdish north. It also instituted an economic embargo of its own. Subsequently, an increasing number of reports have indicated that individual Kurdish leaders are running regions as personal fiefs, the infrastructure has deteriorated, and basic commodities are scarce. Further, a number of Kurdish elements engaged in so-called criminal activities have been tried and executed by various "courts" run by either the Kurdistan Front or one of its eight member parties. Even here, there have been disputes as to guilt, jurisdiction, and validity of sanctions applied. As one Kurd was recently quoted: "Saddam Husain may have tried to destroy us once, but what we are doing to ourselves is ten times worse."

The inability to present a united front is probably the chief determining factor for the 15 January 1992 announcement by the Kurdistan Front suspending autonomy talks with Saddam's government and setting an April election to choose an undisputed leader of the rebel movement. It is unclear whether the Kurdish guerrillas, who number 150,000 men (of varying preparation and armament) in contrast to Iraq's total population of 3.5 million Iraqi Kurds, will be able to attain and maintain unity. Even less clear is whether they will prove themselves fit to provide government services and security not only to Iraq's remaining Kurds, but also the various minority groups in northern Iraq. Still less clear is whether Iraq's Kurds will provide a base for terrorism against Turkey or Iran.

Further, even Saddam's intransigence with regard to UN demands can be seen in different ways. Some Westerners have talked about Saddam's consistent capitulation to the pressures of US and UN demands. Admittedly, this may be true. Alternately, Saddam

could simply be buying time, prevaricating about oil sales and the monitoring of Iraqi weapons. He offered to send a delegation to meet with the Security Council to discuss outstanding problems in March 1992 which, notably, is the month after the US relinquishes its rotating council presidency.

And, whether due to Saddam or not, basic facilities are being restored. Electricity was returned to 68 percent of its former capacity by October 1991 without, it is important to note since it is relevant for Iraqi and Arab perceptions generally, the assistance of the US Army Corps of Engineers who were portrayed as the architects of Kuwait's restoration. Eventually, Saddam and/or his government arranged to ship and sell oil by tankers in exchange for hard cash with Jordan and Turkey. Trade is also reported with Iran.

And, here one sees significant, albeit tenuous attitudinal changes. From statements akin to, "If the US wants Saddam, they should have gotten him," some Iraqis have begun to say, "The US really wanted Iraq's destruction." This may be an opinion held even more widely in the Arab and Islamic worlds generally. It may become even more widely held if the Israeli-Arab peace talks do not succeed.

Does Saddam foresee these attitudinal changes? No one except Saddam can say, but he knows all about revisionist history. What can he lose? He has been blamed for everything already. And, he knows one thing Washington's policy pundits have not realized: change is happening all around him from North Africa through Central Asia right over to Pakistan.

Conclusion

The Middle East of 1992 will not be the Middle East of 2000, still less of 2020. For the present, Iraq, primarily because of Saddam and Baathist aspirations, has been returned to Square One. Its infrastructure and military capabilities have been reduced to the "pre-industrial age" according to one UN report. Saddam himself will be generally blamed for the "death" of the Arab League. Yet, Iraq still possesses important oil and renewable water supplies. And, it should not be forgotten that Iraq has garnered (at least as of February 1992) at least a modicum of sympathy. This has been a result not only of Kuwaiti human rights' abuses in the post-war period, but the continued imposition of UN

sanctions which are generally perceived in the Arab perspective to be linked to the Bush administration's desire to eliminate Saddam.

And the rest of the Middle East? For a variety of reasons (only a few are related to the Gulf War, most are not), the majority of Middle East regimes are beset by problems of population growth, environmental decay, scarcity of resources, national and regional instabilities, and arms proliferation (not only in the sense of threat, but also in diversion of development funds). Many see the US, rightly or not, as culpable.

And the United States? For a variety of reasons, there is growing anti-Americanism. Some Washington pundits cited the calm after DESERT STORM as the advent of a New World Order. Others interpreted it as psychological devastation. America won a military victory, but did she win the peace? For the moment, anti-Americanism remains diffuse and disorganized. What of the future? One Arab was recently quoted as saying: "America came, she saw, she conquered, and then she went home." Soon, within the next two decades, America's global responsibilities and its energy consumption will increase during a period of increasing national constraint.¹⁶

Irrespective of Saddam, what challenges await American policy makers? First, democracy and the New World Order will not necessarily lead to pro-American governments. Second, many countries, including Iran, Syria, Algeria, Pakistan, Libya, and even Egypt, are currently seeking nuclear technology. Just as Iraq professed, they claim peaceful and scientific intentions. And, like Iraq, verification will be politically sensitive and scientifically difficult. Third, wildcards such as Libya and the Sudan are ever present.

Fourth, Syria and Iran, both professing new moderation, have even greater capacity to be disruptive in the long-term. Syria, for example, silently allows a multi-million dollar drug trade to operate from Lebanon, remains obstreperous in the peace process, entrenched in Lebanon, and has been implicated in several recent arms deals. Does Syria have designs on obtaining a Red Sea port through ever-weakening Jordan as well as its bases on the Mediterranean?

What of Iran? While proclaiming a desire for moderation and an end to isolation, it has renewed the *fatwa* calling for Salman Rushdie's death and is

reportedly implicated in the murder of Rushdie's Japanese translator and an attack on his Italian translator. Iranian figures are also reportedly linked to the assassination of Kurdish leader Qassemelou, opposition leader Rajavi's brother, and former Iranian leader Shahpour Bakhtiar in Europe as well as to calls to North African states to create revolutionary Islamic governments like Iran. Furthermore, Iranian ties have continued with extremist Lebanese groups.

This occurs at a time when the demographic scars of Iraq's two recent wars, continuing UN sanctions, and regional competition over scarce resources and ideology remain ever-present specters. Iran and Saudi Arabia are at the forefront of such a rivalry, particularly at a period when Saudi Arabia is perceived as colluding with the US over Iraq's destruction and an oil glut which has led to depressed prices.¹⁷ Finally, until Israel and the Arab states find a means of peaceful coexistence, Israel's foreign and domestic policies retain the capacity to derail American policy and endanger individual American lives.

Sooner or later Saddam will go, one way or another, with or without American help. And, despite or because of Saddam, but primarily because of the US, the region will continue to experience and promulgate change. Tom Friedman writing in the *New York Times* has recently pointed out that when George Kennan in 1947 laid forth a 40 year foreign policy agenda for foreign affairs under a pseudonym, life was much easier. His one-word solution to resolve the threat was "containment." It "provided a seemingly easy guide for policy makers, telling them what was important ... what was a threat ... where they should put their resources [but] with the passing of the cold war, no new byword has come along."

Bush's New World Order lacks form and content for a region like the Middle East whose states are individually beset by problems of legitimacy and economics; regional competition, such as Arab-Israeli, "have" and "have-not" issues among Arabs; and questions of "legitimacy" among Persian, Arab, Turkish, as well as general Islamic aspirants. All of this says the US has not yet won political victory. It faces a dangerous prospect. The Gulf War exacerbated old and created new problems. These problems may be attributed to Saddam. Equally, they may be attributed to a New

World Order promulgated by and benefitting the United States and its allies.

What has been the legacy of overwhelming force, misperception, and lost opportunity of the last several years, particularly if the peace process fails? Many American military strategists argue that the Middle East should be allowed to fragment: "so what if the Arab world after the oil is finished returns to a nomadic existence? We'll have the oil and Israel's existence is secured." But, this is a short-sighted, mechanistic view. Israeli security and well-being under these circumstances is threatened by deteriorating social, economic, and political conditions for which not even nuclear devices can provide a panacea. Further, such a premise is based on assumptions the US will always produce its minimal energy requirements, compete effectively in world markets, have guaranteed access to foreign energy supplies, and be able to influence energy suppliers. Further, in the past, America's reputation as a just superpower, a haven for democracy, and a defender of human rights was unquestioned. With the passing of the Soviet Union, however, US conduct will *de facto* come under closer scrutiny. Whether or not democratization is an inevitable process will have a lot to do with global assessments about the ethical, moral content of America's policies.

Endnotes

1. Christine Helms, *Arabism and Islam: Stateless Nations and Nationless States* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1990), 18-19.

2. Food and medical supplies are exempt from UN sanctions. Although Iraq must obtain approval for such imports, it is not required to say where purchasing funds originate. In late 1991, Iraq imported two million tons of food but continues to suffer severe shortages and rampant inflation.

On 19 September 1991, the UN Security Council authorized Iraq to sell \$1.6 billion, \$900 million of which was to be slated for food purchases. The remainder was to be allocated for destruction of its weapons capability and war-related compensation. Throughout the summer, the US had delayed this agreement by its insistence that 50 percent of Iraq's sales should be designated for compensation. When the US accepted the figure of 30 percent in September, Iraq then refused to sell oil, arguing the restrictions violated its sovereignty.

Iraq, as of late 1991, had also refused to use \$340 million frozen in the Bank for International Settlements.

3. The Palestinian uprising against Israel, which began in December 1987 and primarily entailed rock throwing demonstrations against Israeli authorities, entered yet a new phase in 1991. Israeli citizens are now targeted. Attackers are

acting alone or in small groups. New weapons are being employed. In addition, there have been violent attacks by Arabs against Arabs. One tally for April and May 1991 shows the Israeli army killed only 18 Palestinians, while 45 were killed by other Arabs. Of these, some were accused of collaboration with Israel, but others are believed to be victims of an increasingly fierce rivalry between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Islamic Resistance (Hamas).

4. Israeli immigration and settlement policies are two central concerns of Arab and Islamic critics. According to the US Department of State in late March 1991, the Jewish population in the Occupied Territories had grown 10 percent since 1990. In total, 100,000 Jewish settlers in 20 communities made up 13 percent of these populations. Settlers totalled 90,000 in the West Bank alone, an increase of 40,000 since 1984. Included were 10,000 Soviet immigrants settled during 1990 in the West Bank, Golan Heights, and East Jerusalem. Other reports indicate these figures could double with government offers of financial incentives to settle in the Occupied Territories. Jewish populations are expected to become a majority soon in certain key regions.

Another concern, shared by the US, is that increased immigration will propel a settlement policy that cannot be reversed, making peace negotiations moot. Estimates for Jewish immigrants in 1990 and 1991 were almost 400,000. Ninety percent of these were Soviet Jews, many professionals who are increasingly finding fewer employment opportunities in Israel's 4.7 million population. Some analysts also anticipate Palestinian jobs will be permanently lost to these immigrants. Some predict that Israel's 10.2 percent unemployment figure could double in 1992.

Further, Arab owned housing in East Jerusalem and the West Bank was targeted in 1991 for confiscation by Jewish settlers; Israel's cabinet approved new restrictions in March 1991 against Palestinians, to include deportations; and a ban on Palestinians travelling and working in Israel proper, begun during the Gulf crisis, was extended. Since only 50,000 of a pre-war figure of 110,000 can commute to work, the economic plight of many Palestinian families is becoming increasingly dire.

Other Israeli actions certain to raise Islamic ire include the assassination of Hezbollah's Shaikh Ahmad Musawi in Lebanon in February 1992; the sentencing of Ahmad Yassin, leader of Hamas, to a life sentence in October 1991 for ordering the killings of Palestinian collaborators; and the continued retention of Shaikh Abd al-Karim Oheid, influential among Lebanese fundamentalists, kidnapped in 1989.

Finally, even as Israeli and Arab delegates supposedly sought peace, Israel granted police extra-judicial rights in early 1992 to shoot demonstrators at will and announced it was not bound to the Camp David accords.

5. Saudi Arabia alone incurred a \$64 billion debt, suffering an estimated \$50 billion budget deficit for 1990-91. Expenditures included support of Kuwaiti refugees, \$13.5 billion to the US to defray Gulf War costs, a \$1.5 billion loan to the former Soviet Union, \$4 billion to Arab coalition states, defense purchases, and improvements to upgrade moth-balled oil production from 5 mbpd to over 8.5 mbpd. For the first time in two decades, the Saudis took out a foreign loan for \$4.5 billion in May 1991. This and subsequent borrowing of \$5.5 billion have been heavily criticized by Islamic fundamentalists.

6. Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel stated in early February 1992 that a military strike against Saddam would create

serious image problems for America. Further, support for Shia or Kurdish rebel groups would incite region-wide problems.

The Gulf War and the Soviet Union's dissolution, which has created an unstable northeast frontier, has been a watershed for Turkey. Former Prime Minister and still President Turgut Ozal's pro-American policies not only led to key government resignations (ministers of defense and foreign affairs as well as chief of the armed forces) in 1990, but to the 1991 election defeat of his Motherland Party. Turkey, which lost \$5 million daily and 60 percent of its energy supply by trans-shipping Iraqi crude, has incurred more than \$7 billion in war-related debt. This also included loss of tourism, exports, contracts, and costs incurred when 450,000 Iraqi Kurds sought refuge after the uprisings. Aid from the US and its allies is not expected to compensate for even one-quarter of this figure.

Further, Turkey now suffers from 70 percent inflation and a dramatic increase in terrorist attacks from Kurdish guerrillas and Islamic fundamentalists. These attacks have included assassinations of American businessmen and explosive devices detonated at or near US-related facilities. In early 1991, Lieutenant General Hulusi Sayin, a government security adviser, was shot and killed outside his home.

7. The number of Iraqi deaths is controversial. Figures most often repeated are 85,000 to 110,000 Iraqi soldiers and 25,000 to 100,000 civilians killed during the war itself. Another 40,000 to 60,000 are believed to have been killed in post-war uprisings. In addition, some estimates say that another 70,000 to 100,000 died from lack of medical facilities after both war and uprisings.

When these figures are compared to overall demographic statistics, the conclusions are shocking. Approximately 500,000 Iraqi males 18 to 45 were pressed into the war effort. World Bank figures estimate Iraqi males in their twenties total 1.5 million. Not only can war "sweep away parts of generations," but it can "affect the size of future generations." Iraq had already lost at least 120,000 males in the Iran-Iraq war and, only one-quarter the size of Iran, is less able to sustain that loss. See "Was Saddam Prepared to Kill his Country? The Lasting Demographic Scars of a Decade of War," *Washington Post*, 3 March 1991, C3.

A Census Bureau analyst also estimated in January 1992 that life expectancy of Iraqi males dropped by 20 years (66 to 46 years) due to the war, and females 11 years (68 to 57 years). It also estimates 70,000 deaths due to deteriorating health conditions linked to infrastructural damage from the war.

8. So-called "smart bombs" comprised only six percent of US bombs. Despite US claims that only military targets were hit, clearly many "targets" also served civilian functions. Twenty-seven out of 35 bridges over the Euphrates were hit and two of the five bridges spanning central Baghdad. In total, more than 95 bridges were destroyed.

Reportedly, because strikes at dams and reservoirs raised the specter of uncontrolled floods, more than 13 billion cubic yards of water, which had taken two years to store, was released. Four of seven regulators suffered damage controlling Tigris and Euphrates flow. The main sewage facility at Rustamia outside Baghdad, which serves 2.5 million of Baghdad's 4.5 million people, was without electricity causing raw sewage to be pumped directly into the Tigris. Only 25 percent of Baghdad had clean water in the post-war period.

According to a July 1991 report by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, Iraq faces widespread famine. Iraq, already suffering from drought, will produce only 1.25 million tons, or one-third of its 1990 yield. Irrigation and drainage were

seriously affected. Pesticides were not only in short supply but were regulated because of the fear of Iraqi chemical weapons. In many areas, 50 percent of Iraq's livestock and of its farm machinery were lost. The FAO noted that in pre-war years, Iraq produced one-third of its food requirements while imports for the remainder cost \$2 billion.

Infrastructural damage has also led to increased health risks. For example, contamination of the water supply has led to diseases not seen in years, some doctors have said. Mortality rates for children have quadrupled, and one-quarter of children under five are severely malnourished. Electrical generation had only been returned to 68 percent of pre-war capacity in late 1991. Water in two-thirds of all houses tested showed fecal contamination. One hospital in Irbil reported in 1991 that more than 50 percent of its patients had typhoid. Government rations for badly needed infant formula are sufficient for only six days out of each month. At least three separate reports, several conducted by agencies of the UN and a Harvard University medical team, estimate that 100,000 and as many as 170,000 Iraqi children under the age of five risk severe malnutrition, disease, and possible death during 1991-92.

9. Iraq is one of the most pluralistic of all Arab countries, along with Lebanon and the Sudan. It is not only the number of these groups, but their location and concentration that creates problems for the Iraqi government. Kurds, 20 percent of the population, are settled in the northern third of the country and have close ties with Kurds in Iran and Turkey. Primarily Sunni Muslim, there are also Christian Kurds. Intermingled in Kurdistan are pockets of other ethnic and religious groups, such as Turks, Assyrians, and Yazidis. Among these are 500,000 Christians who, ironically, roughly equal the population of Kuwait.

Sunni Muslim Arabs total 30 to 35 percent of Iraq's population. Although scattered throughout the country, the overwhelming majority are in Baghdad.

Shia, who total 55 percent of the population, are therefore a majority which is concentrated in southern Iraq. Two of the largest southern cities, al-Najaf and Karbala, are those most revered by Shia. Ayatollah Khomeini, who resided in Iraq during his exile from Iran, called for the capture of these cities during the Iran-Iraq War. Some of the worst fighting during the uprisings took place in these cities as well as Basra.

10. No single spoken or written Kurdish language has been agreed upon. There are four forms of Kurdish in Iraq. Kurmanji is spoken north of Mosul. Sorani or Kurdi is associated with Irbil province, but has been taught in Iraqi schools generally. Sulaimani is the language of literature. Gorani is spoken among Kurds in the southernmost Kurdish region, including Islamic sects like the Shabaks.

11. Ironically, a leading Iraqi opposition figure recently confided to the author, "Whatever the opposition tells you, privately they supported Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. They only opposed it when they felt it would not succeed."

12. Assyrians estimate they were 15 percent of the 450,000 refugees who fled northern Iraq for Turkey after the uprisings. In sum, approximately 1.5 million refugees fled to Iran and Turkey.

13. It is estimated that the total Kurdish population is somewhere near 25 million spread among five states. The former republics of the Soviet Union and Syria each had Kurdish pockets probably totalling no more than 1.5 to 2 million. Iraqi Kurds number 20 percent or four million of Iraq's population of 17 million. Ironically, they have had more political freedoms than Kurds elsewhere because of the Kurdish Autonomy Zone.

Turkish Kurds number 12 to 14 million out of a total population of over 53 million. Its guerrillas, most often operating out of Syria, have sabotaged Turkish dams, Iraq's pipeline through Turkey, as well as attacked authorities in northeastern Turkey. During 1991, there was evidence that some Kurdish groups had been influenced by Islamic fundamentalism and may have orchestrated several terrorist incidents in Ankara and Istanbul. The most well-known and violent group to date has been the Marxist Kurdish Workers Party (PKK). Its leader, Abdullah Ocalan, resides in Damascus. Since 1984, they have advocated a separate Kurdish state. Five hundred have died as a result during this past five years.

Iran's Kurdish population is about 5.5 million or 10 percent of its total population. Iranian governments have often manipulated their own and neighboring Kurdish groups for political benefit. Khomeini himself saw Kurdish nationalism as detrimental to the expansion of an Islamic state. Should the present Iranian government decide to pursue those aims, as indeed its support of the Shia uprisings in the post-war period indicate, it is likely to employ the Kurds again. Turkish officials already suspect Iran may be politically active among its Kurdish groups.

14. For example, Ali Hasan al-Majid, Saddam's cousin, reportedly controlled Kuwait during Iraq's occupation and directed suppression of the Kurdish uprising in the post-war period. In March 1991, he was appointed to head the Ministry of Interior and on 1 October 1991, he was appointed to the Revolutionary Command Council. On 6 November 1991, al-Majid replaced Husain Kamal Hasan as Minister of Defense.

Husain Kamal Hasan, formerly Saddam's chief of palace security who later directed the Ministry of Industry and Military Production before the Gulf crisis, replaced a respected career general (Lieutenant General Saadi Tuma Abbas) as Minister of

Defense on 6 April 1991. Replaced by al-Majid in November, he was restored to grace by being appointed a presidential adviser on 12 February 1992.

Wathban Ibrahim Hasan, the oldest of Saddam's three half-brothers and formerly governor of Salah al-Din province and head of military intelligence, replaced Ali Hasan al-Majid as Minister of Interior on 13 November 1991. Saddam's other two half-brothers are Sabawi, who heads the secret police, and Barzan, who formerly headed intelligence and is now Iraq's UN representative in Geneva. It should not be forgotten, however, that at other times, notably the mid-1980s, Saddam has also fired his relatives *en masse*.

15. Hammadi, a Shia and perhaps the most respected of the Baathists, may have served the same public-relations function as Shahpour Bakhtiar in the last days of the Shah's regime. Nonetheless, Hammadi lost both his post and his membership on the Revolutionary Command Council in September 1991.

16. Global demand for oil, 65 mbpd, will outstrip world production capacity by 1995, according to some estimates. OPEC countries prior to the Gulf War produced 23-25 mbpd or one-third of global consumption. This percentage will increase as the output of the US and former Soviet Union experience greater constraints. The majority of proven Arab oil reserves is in Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Although Iranian production is now over 3.0 mbpd, its domestic energy consumption will increase as oil exploitation becomes costlier because of earlier attempts to over-produce its fields.

17. As oil prices slide to \$19.46 per barrel (mid-February 1992), OPEC agreed to reduce oil production from 24.2 mbpd to 22.9 mbpd. Saudi Arabia, whose 8.5 mbpd is one-third of total OPEC production, insists it will cut no more than 500,000 bpd of its own production.

Iran's Security Policies: "New Thinking" or new Means to Pursue Old Objectives?

Eric Hooglund

The Persian Gulf War of 1990-91 altered the regional balance of power and the pattern of political relationships in Southwest Asia. Throughout the 1980s, the six oil-rich kingdoms of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) had shared the Iraqi view that Iran, the most populous country in the area, was the principal threat to regional peace and security. This perception arose following the Iranian Revolution of 1979, which brought to power a regime whose rhetoric extolled the virtues of exporting revolution throughout the region.

During the eight year Iran-Iraq War (1980-88), Kuwait and Saudi Arabia actually served as Baghdad's *de facto* allies, providing Saddam Husain's government with generous monetary assistance which it used to help finance the war's huge military expenses. Saddam Husain subsequently demonstrated his gratitude by invading Kuwait, an action which not only prompted the United Nations (UN)-sanctioned war against Iraq, but also irrevocably shattered the region's decade-long diplomatic alliances.

Iraq's betrayal of former allies and its humiliating military defeat combined to enhance the status of Iran. The Arab states and Iran recognized that they had a common interest in containing Iraq. Nevertheless, the prospect of Iran re-emerging as a regional superpower, a position it had enjoyed during the 1970s, caused anxiety in many capitals. For American, Arab, and European analysts, the fundamental questions have been whether Iran would continue its post-revolution role as an agent of regional political instability, or whether Iran now accepted and would help to maintain the existing political *status quo* in the Persian Gulf. It is not

possible to provide answers to these questions without some insight into how the current Iranian government perceives its foreign and security policy goals. The objective of this paper is to assess Iran's views about regional security issues.¹

Iranian national security analysts generally cite two major historical developments in 1991 as requiring the Islamic Republic to reevaluate and even redefine its foreign policy objectives for the rest of the decade. The first event was the defeat of Iraq by the US-led coalition of Arab and European allies. Iran had considered Iraq its principal enemy since 1980 when Saddam Husain initiated his first regional war by invading the nascent Islamic Republic. This debilitating conflict lasted for eight years before Tehran reluctantly concluded that its armed forces could not defeat Iraq and agreed to accept a UN-mediated ceasefire. Although there had been no real victor in the Iran-Iraq War, many Iranians and most foreign experts believed the war had left Iran militarily weakened and diplomatically isolated, while Iraq was widely perceived as having emerged from the conflict as the dominant power in the Persian Gulf region. Iraq's subsequent invasion and occupation of Kuwait reinforced an Iranian view that Saddam Husain's regime was a dangerous threat to stability in the area.

Even though Iran did not join the international effort to liberate Kuwait, its leaders were relieved when Iraq's armed forces were decisively routed. The implication of Iraq's defeat was obvious in Tehran: the regional balance of power had shifted significantly, and the new situation provided an opportunity for Iran to reassert its influence.

The second major event was the break-up of the Soviet Union, Iran's powerful neighbor to the north. For 70 years, the northern border had been controlled by a strong centralized state that was alternately hostile and friendly toward Tehran. During the Pahlavi dynasty (1926-1979), a primary

objective of Iranian diplomacy was to keep Soviet influence in check through alliances with countries perceived by Iran as political rivals of the Soviet Union.

The establishment of the Islamic Republic in 1979 resulted in a radically different conception of international relations. The basic premise of this new world view held that the Soviet Union and the United States were two malevolent superpowers competing to control the policies and resources of Third World countries (rarely defined by Iranians but implicitly including most of the countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America). The often-touted slogan, "neither east nor west," aptly expressed Iran's determination not to become aligned with either superpower.

The realities of geography, however, forced Tehran to maintain a minimal level of relations with Moscow. The Islamic Republic generally tried to benefit from these ties while not relaxing its suspicions of Soviet intentions. The sudden dissolution of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991, and its replacement by 15 separate republics including, right on Iran's border, the three small and relatively weak countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan, aroused both concern and optimism in Tehran about security and political stability along the northern frontier.

In pondering developments to their north and south, Iranian leaders concluded that their country's national security in the 1990s would depend crucially on the maintenance of political stability in these two surrounding geographic areas: the Persian Gulf region and Central Asia.² From Tehran's perspective, both areas are afflicted by political instability. With respect to Central Asia, Iran is deeply concerned about the regional impact of ethnic strife in Azerbaijan and the 13-year civil war in Afghanistan. To the south and west, internal conflicts in Iraq pose potentially even more serious threats.

A primary goal of security policy, then, is to contain the region's political instability. Iranian leaders see deterrence, diplomacy, and covert action as important policy instruments in achieving this overall aim. Since mid-1988, Tehran has emphasized diplomacy, that is the broadening and strengthening of cooperative relations with neighbors, in an effort to lessen regional political tensions. At the same time, however, continuing

concerns about Iraq's military capability and intentions have prompted Iran to rebuild its own armed forces to serve as a deterrent to possible aggression. Also, Iran has provided covert assistance to regional anti-government forces, a strategy that is much more risky in terms of promoting political stability. Typical of other countries that support covert operations, Iran hoped its policy would dissuade unfriendly regimes from acting against Iranian interests, or that the help might enable the opposition to overthrow a disliked regime and install in power a government that shared Iran's vision of regional security.

The Persian Gulf Region

Iran's primary security interests are focused on the Persian Gulf-Gulf of Oman. This waterway is of vital strategic importance to Iran because virtually all its petroleum exports, which earn 90 percent of the government's revenues, transit through it. In addition, the majority of imports enter the country through Bandar-e Abbas, Bushehr, and other Gulf ports. It is thus essential that no hostile power control access to these waters. Since Iran has the longest coastline (about 1,100 miles along the entire northern shore, stretching from the mouth of the Shatt al-Arab River in the west to the Pakistan border in the east) of the eight countries bordering on the Persian Gulf-Gulf of Oman, it is not only well-positioned to project its own power, but also extremely vulnerable to external attacks on its coastal oil facilities and sea-borne commerce. Maintaining the security of Gulf waters effectively, therefore, requires non-Arab Iran to cooperate, at least minimally, with the Arab states along the southern shore. Since 1979, however, tensions and conflict rather than cooperation have characterized Iran's relations with most of its Arab neighbors.

The contest for regional power and influence has been especially intense with Iraq, the country with which Iran shares a 730-mile border. The two states fought a mutually devastating eight year war, initiated by Iraqi President Saddam Husain, who believed (incorrectly as it turned out) that the revolutionary turmoil prevailing in Iran during 1980 would assure his military a quick victory.³ For nearly two years, Iraqi troops actually occupied part of Iran's oil-rich southwestern province of Khuzistan, including the country's then-major port

of Khorramshahr, but in the summer of 1982, they were forced back across the border and subsequently never regained an offensive advantage.⁴

Although the Iranian armed forces won several major battles between 1982 and 1988, they failed to inflict a decisive defeat on Iraq.⁵ The material cost of Iran's minor victories became increasingly prohibitive, especially after 1984, as casualties mounted, falling oil prices reduced revenues, and diplomatic isolation simultaneously increased prices and limited sources, quantity, and quality of imported weapons.⁶ The effective internationalization of the conflict in 1987, when the United States and several European countries dispatched naval ships to the region ostensibly to protect freedom of navigation in the Persian Gulf, further eroded Iranian confidence in the prospects of achieving the conclusive military victory that would lead to the overthrow of Saddam Husain.⁷ By agreeing in 1988 to accept the ceasefire in place and other provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 598, Iran implicitly acknowledged that its war with Iraq was stalemated. The cessation of hostilities did not alter, however, the Iranian perception that Saddam Husain's regime posed a serious threat to regional security.

Since mid-1988, the principal objective of Iran's security policy in the Persian Gulf has been the containment of Iraq. Convinced that the Arab states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE) shared its interest in containing Saddam Husain's ambitions, Tehran embarked on a major diplomatic effort to normalize its badly strained relations with them.⁸ From Iran's perspective, the ceasefire and anticipated peace negotiations with Iraq obviated the reasons for the antagonism that had been directed at most GCC members, namely the financial and other support they had provided Saddam Husain during the war.⁹ Iranians felt particular rancor toward Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, the countries that had given the Iraqis the most visible assistance; in fact, relations with both countries had finally been severed in early 1988. Nevertheless, Iran was determined to pursue the process of normalization and encouraged Oman and the UAE, two countries with which it had maintained relatively cordial relations throughout the war, to act as intermediaries with the other GCC states.

Developing friendly ties with the GCC countries required Tehran to recognize, at least tacitly, that support of Baghdad during the Iran-Iraq War had been motivated by fears of Iranian-inspired revolution. The policies of the Islamic Republic following its establishment in 1979 had contributed to these fears. Even though Iran's foreign ministry consistently tried to reassure the Arab states of the Persian Gulf that Tehran desired cooperative relations with them, the country's influential political and religious leaders frequently denounced the institution of monarchy (all six GCC countries were ruled by hereditary dynasties) as un-Islamic and periodically urged the people to overthrow such regimes. At least equally intimidating, from the perspective of the Arab rulers, was Iran's proclaimed policy of exporting revolution.¹⁰ Despite Iran's repeated pronouncements that its example of revolution would never be exported by force, Arab rulers, who belonged to the majority Sunni sect of Islam, believed the Islamic Republic actively promoted the spread of its radical political ideas among the Gulf's substantial Muslim minority who adhered to the same Shia denomination that predominated in Iran.¹¹ Numerous violent incidents involving members of local Shia communities and security forces in Bahrain, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia tended to reinforce the deep suspicions these rulers had about Iranian intentions.¹²

Concern about the export of revolution enabled Saudi Arabia to persuade its five small oil-producing neighbors to join it in forming a collective security and economic cooperation organization, the GCC, in early 1981.¹³ Initially, the GCC's primary mission was to counter suspected Iranian subversive activities within member states. At the end of 1981, the GCC accused Iran of training a group of Bahraini and Saudi nationals who had been charged with plotting to assassinate government officials in Bahrain.¹⁴ Tehran strenuously denied any complicity in the alleged plot, but GCC leaders were convinced otherwise, despite the lack of solid evidence connecting the plotters to the Iranian government. The incident served to establish a pattern whereby Arab rulers assumed Iran was implicated in any oppositional activity involving local Shia. This mindset endured throughout the 1980s, and it impeded Iranian efforts to normalize relations with the GCC countries.

Improving ties with the six monarchies of the

Arabian Peninsula meant Tehran had to convince these countries that it was not exporting revolution; in effect, that it accepted the legitimacy and permanence of the ruling families. President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, elected in 1989 for a four-year term, and his top foreign policy advisors agreed to embark on this major policy shift because they had become convinced that past support of opposition groups in the GCC countries had not brought Iran any political benefits.¹⁵ The process of normalizing relations would ease tensions and greatly enhance regional political stability. The Rafsanjani administration believed such stability was essential in order for Iran to undertake successfully a massive reconstruction program for its war-damaged industries and infrastructure.

Not all of the country's revolutionary elite, however, subscribed to this view. Several politicians, who were not in the government but did occupy influential positions in the Majlis (parliament) or as newspaper editors, were alarmed by what they perceived, at least *vis-à-vis* the GCC countries, as an abandonment of the policy of exporting revolution. In public speeches and editorials in newspapers such as *Jomhuri-ye Islami* and *Salaam*, they continued to urge support for the Islamic revolutionary struggle against the "corrupt regimes" and "servile American puppets" of the Persian Gulf, especially in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Although these criticisms failed to deflect the Rafsanjani administration from its policy of normalizing relations, Arab rulers, who were absolute monarchs unaccustomed to legislators or the press expressing views contradictory to government policy, understandably were confused by the mixed signals, and tended to distrust Tehran's friendly diplomatic overtures.

Nevertheless, Iran's assiduous cultivation of better relations gradually led to the signing of several commercial agreements between it and the countries of Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and the UAE. The most important success of this new policy was the restoration of diplomatic relations with Kuwait. This significant development in the process of normalization happened, however, right on the eve of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, an event that temporarily nullified for Tehran more than a year of patient negotiations.

Iran was unprepared for, even stunned by, the Iraqi occupation and annexation of Kuwait and the rapid

succession of events that ensued between August 1990 and March 1991: the massive US military intervention; the unprecedented level of superpower cooperation; the subsequent Persian Gulf War that liberated Kuwait in less than 50 days; the popular uprisings in southern and northern Iraq, rebellions that Saddam Husain's recently defeated army successfully and brutally crushed; and the mass exodus of more than one million Iraqi refugees into Iran.

At the outset of the crisis Tehran had proclaimed its neutrality, and over the following seven months, generally tried to follow a policy aimed at minimizing any adverse consequences of the conflict. The situation posed some major dilemmas. For example, Iran was extremely uncomfortable about the presence of thousands of American troops in Saudi Arabia and on ships in Gulf waters, but it was even more concerned about its own long term security if its enemy, Iraq, prevailed in the effort to annex Kuwait. Also, in the midst of the crisis, Saddam Husain unexpectedly offered to sign a peace treaty recognizing the middle of the Shatt al Arab River as Iraq's common border with Iran, even though that very boundary had been his pretext for invading Iran back in 1980. His implicit *quid pro quo*, however, that Iran help him circumvent UN-imposed economic sanctions, would have permitted Iraq to prolong its occupation of Kuwait, remain a military menace, and threaten Iran in the future when it suited Saddam's purpose. In Tehran, the official view remained consistent throughout the crisis: that Saddam Husain's policies were the principal danger for the region. Thus, Iran held fast to a position of neither helping Iraq nor impeding international efforts to punish it.

Despite Tehran's noninvolvement in the Persian Gulf War (other than to observe UN economic sanctions against Iraq), the Islamic Republic actually benefitted politically from the outcome. Iran was able to enhance its regional status because the conflict reversed the political alignments of the 1980s. As discussed above, fears of Iran had propelled some GCC states, particularly Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, to become *de facto* allies of Iraq in its conflict with Iran. When Saddam Husain dramatically turned on his allies in 1990, this action forced the GCC countries, all of which participated in the allied coalition that successfully opposed the Iraqi leader, to cease focusing their security

concerns on Iran and instead concentrate on Iraq. The aftermath of the war failed to allay GCC fears because Saddam Husain, despite the humiliating defeat inflicted on his army by the US-led coalition of forces, demonstrated that his regime retained both the capacity to suppress internal dissent and the potential to pressure small neighbors once the US military had departed from the region. GCC leaders concluded that the government in Baghdad would not be forgiving when the time eventually came to settle accounts. Thus, like the Iranians, they embraced a policy aimed at the containment of Iraq. This mutuality of concerns with respect to Saddam Husain induced Saudi Arabia, the GCC country most suspicious of Tehran and least receptive to post-1988 diplomatic overtures, to engage in a rapprochement with Iran.

Although Tehran and Riyadh shared similar views about the nature of the Iraqi threat, substantial differences existed on broader security issues. In particular, Iran opposed any foreign military presence in the region. The Islamic Republic's position obviously was motivated by its own fears of, and ideological aversion to, the United States, but its diplomats generally avoided anti-American rhetoric and tried to persuade the Saudi, Kuwaiti, and other rulers that cooperation between Iran and the GCC would be sufficient to maintain regional security. Although GCC leaders listened to the Iranian proposals with diplomatic politeness, they did not find them appealing. None of the GCC states believed Iran was militarily strong enough to intimidate Iraq, and most had lingering suspicions about Iran's own regional intentions. Thus, they regarded some form of military association with the United States, and even with other non-Gulf powers such as Egypt and Syria, as an essential deterrent to further Iraqi aggression. To Iran's dismay, Kuwait actually signed a defense treaty with the United States and initiated negotiations for similar agreements with Britain and France; the other GCC states concluded treaties providing for frequent US training exercises on their territory.

From Tehran's perspective, the intensification of US-GCC defense relations during 1991 was definitely unwelcome because it portended a semi-permanent American military presence in the Persian Gulf. The Rafsanjani administration was not convinced, however, that this disagreeable development necessarily posed a threat to Iran.

Nevertheless, the government publicized its objections to the defense pacts, although it seemed to be as much motivated by a desire to appease Tehran's extremist press, which fulminated against the US-Kuwaiti defense treaty, as it was by any concern about US influence. These objections actually amounted to little more than polite verbal protests, because Iran's policy makers believed preserving diplomatic gains achieved with the GCC countries was too important to risk over an issue the Arabs were likely to perceive as interference in their internal affairs.

In effect, the Rafsanjani administration concluded, when friendly persuasion failed to wean GCC states away from their relationship with the United States, that Iran would follow a good neighbor policy of tolerating the situation and concentrating on matters of mutual concern.¹⁶ Iran's primary security concern was not the United States but Iraq. Indeed, at least one senior Iranian diplomat privately acknowledged that his country benefitted indirectly from the US presence in the Gulf because it served to deter Saddam Husain at a time when Iran was not in a military position to challenge Iraq.¹⁷

Since the spring of 1991, Iran and the GCC countries have reached similar views regarding the extent of the Iraqi threat. Neither the Iranians nor the Arabs have normalized relations with Baghdad; both have concluded that the political survival of Saddam Husain's regime during the past year has been undesirable. They attribute its staying power to the loyalty of the military, which remains a formidable force. They believe Iraq's ill-trained army conscripts bore the brunt of last years' military defeat, while the professional Republican Guards and the officer corps remained largely intact. Purged of some 200,000 unreliable draftees, Iraq's reorganized armed forces, variously estimated at 350,000 to 500,000 men, still constitutes the largest national military force in the region.¹⁸ Like the GCC leaders, Iranians are convinced that virtually all the Iraqi officers share Saddam Husain's Baathist ideology, a world view that has been a source of regional instability for more than two decades. Consequently, both Iran and the Arabs generally dismiss as naive the notion, advanced in some American political circles, that a military *coup d'état* against Saddam Husain would remove the security threat that Iraq poses.

Although Tehran would welcome replacement of

the Baathist regime, it has concluded that such a change, barring major outside intervention, is unrealistic. Consequently, it must co-exist with the disliked government in Baghdad. Despite its publicly acknowledged covert aid to Iraqi groups opposed to Saddam Husain (see below), Iran actually maintains formal relations with Iraq and has hosted several delegations of high-ranking Iraqi officials since September 1990. Baghdad initiated the reestablishment of diplomatic ties soon after the imposition of United Nations economic sanctions. In an apparent effort to obtain Iranian assistance in evading the sanctions (help Iraq never received), Saddam Husain made major concessions on the unresolved issues of the Iran-Iraq War: he withdrew Iraqi troops from several hundred square miles of Iranian border territory they had occupied since the ceasefire; he began an exchange of prisoners-of-war; he returned some Iranian equipment captured during the war; and, most importantly, he agreed to accept the median line of the Shatt al Arab River, the proclaimed *casus belli* of the war, as the international boundary between Iran and Iraq.

Saddam's sudden transformation from foe to friend failed to impress Iranian leaders, who suspected his motives and believed an Iraqi success in Kuwait would pave the way for renewed attacks on their own country. At any rate, before time could test the sincerity of Saddam's overtures, his armed forces were routed in Kuwait, and mass popular uprisings against his regime subsequently spread throughout southern and northern Iraq. Saddam Husain accused Iran of infiltrating armed foreign agents into Iraq to instigate the rebellions, a charge which strained the still fragile relations between Baghdad and Tehran. Mutual suspicions have intensified in the past year, and virtually no progress has been achieved in settling outstanding disputes. Furthermore, Saddam Husain's willingness to endure UN sanctions rather than destroy his still formidable arsenal of weapons has convinced Iran's leaders that Iraq remains potentially a very dangerous enemy.

Deterrence

Recognizing that diplomacy may not be effective in containing Iraq, Tehran has been trying to rebuild Iran's military capability to serve as a deterrent to

future Iraqi aggression. Although senior officials have not defined the level of strength required to deter Iraq, they have conceded that attaining this goal probably will be a long-term policy. There have been political constraints on Iran's defense program since 1988. The Rafsanjani administration acknowledged the country's inability to achieve military superiority over or even parity with Iraq without major defense expenditures. It maintained that Iran could not afford both guns and butter and chose to make the latter (the government's various non-defense programs) a priority. Consequently, the overall level of defense appropriations significantly decreased in successive budgets for fiscal years 1989-90, 1990-91 and 1991-92.¹⁹

Since the demobilization of at least 50 percent of the armed forces between 1988 and 1991 accounted for a large part of the decrease, it is probable that funds allocated for the acquisition of new weapons remained constant or even increased slightly. In contrast, Iraq continued a high level of defense expenditures between 1988 and 1990 and almost certainly increased its military superiority *vis-à-vis* Iran. The crushing defeat of Saddam Husain's army during the Persian Gulf War adversely affected its offensive capability and aroused initial optimism in Tehran that Iraq's overall military strength may have been reduced to relative parity with that of Iran. It soon became obvious, however, that Iraq's post-defeat military inventory remained formidable: at least three times as many tanks and armored vehicles as Iran; and at least three times as many functioning combat aircraft, even after losing the 140 planes that fled to Iran (and have not been returned) to escape destruction.²⁰ Subsequent revelations about the extent of Iraq's chemical weapons and missile arsenal and the advanced stage of its nuclear weapons development program further alarmed the Iranians.

Despite its concerns about Iraq's stockpile of both conventional and unconventional arms, there is no evidence, contrary to the exaggerated accounts in some of the American, Arab, and European media, that Iran has accelerated its arms procurement since the Persian Gulf War.²¹ Nevertheless, Iran does have a rearmament program, the primary object of which is to replace sophisticated equipment destroyed during the eight year war with Iraq. The Rafsanjani administration's five-year budget, approved by the Majlis in early 1990, allocates up

to \$2 billion annually for arms imports. Tehran anticipated that weapons purchases from the Soviet Union, which historically had not been a major arms supplier for Iran, would provide the foundation for rebuilding the country's military capability. Under the terms of a 1989 agreement pertaining to economic cooperation and security matters, the Soviet Union undertook to sell Iran an estimated \$1 billion worth of military equipment annually over a five year period.²² The assorted arms Iran had acquired through the end of 1991 included at least 24 MiG-29 (Fulcrum) fighter jets, at least 24 Su-24 (Fencer) ground attack aircraft, and at least 100 SA-5 anti-aircraft missiles.²³ The agreement also provided for about four dozen Iranian sailors to receive two years of training at a Soviet submarine base preparatory to Iran's purchase of two Kilo class submarines.²⁴

The dissolution of the Soviet Union already has begun to affect Iranian acquisitions of weapons under the 1989 pact. Significantly, Iran actually obtained most of the Soviet military equipment not by paying cash but by crediting to Moscow revenues it earned from the sale of its own natural gas to Soviet energy agencies in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. Although independence abruptly voided this *de facto* barter trade, it has not diminished the need for Iranian gas in the Caucasus republics. All three of these new countries are in the process of negotiating agreements to keep the gas pipelines open, but none of their factories manufacture weapons or even consumer products of interest to Iran; they also lack the hard currency that Iran may now require to pay for gas exports. The aircraft, missiles, and tanks that Iran hopes to acquire actually are made in Russia and Ukraine. However, the Russian government has announced plans to curb weapons production and intentions to reduce arms sales to Iran, apparently in response to urging from Germany and the United States.²⁵ In contrast, Ukraine has signed a four year barter deal with the Islamic Republic worth about \$7 billion. In exchange for Iranian oil and natural gas, Ukraine will provide Iran with an array of industrial products, including an unspecified quantity of weapons.²⁶

Iran also has continued to purchase weapons from other countries, in particular China (Silkworm and other missiles), North Korea (Scud missiles), and Argentina (small arms). Its announcement last fall

that it had acquired nuclear technology, including a small reactor, from China, aroused considerable anxiety among international nuclear specialists who were reeling from the discovery of Iraq's well-developed but covert nuclear weapons program.²⁷ The Islamic Republic already had one functioning nuclear reactor, originally installed by Americans at the University of Tehran in the early 1970s during the rule of the last shah. Tehran insisted that acquisitions of additional technology were for peaceful purposes only, including use in two partially completed 1,250 megawatt reactors at an atomic power plant under construction in Bushehr.²⁸

Because nuclear technology can have both peaceful and military applications, the international media carried stories filled with intense speculation as to whether Iran had embarked on its own secret nuclear weapons development program. Mounting concern about such a possibility prompted the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to take the unprecedented step of requesting Tehran to accept an inspection team to visit suspected sites. The IAEA used its authority under the 1968 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty to carry out this "challenge inspection" of sites in Iran, a member country. The IAEA team spent one week in Iran in early February and toured six facilities, including three sites Tehran had previously declared subject to inspection and three suspected sites selected without prior consultation with the Iranian government. The IAEA report concluded that Iran's nuclear energy program was for peaceful purposes, i.e. limited to the generation of electricity and research applications in medicine, and that there was no evidence to support allegations of a covert nuclear weapons program. Furthermore, the IAEA praised Iranian officials for cooperation with the inspection, including unimpeded access to facilities, nuclear scientists, and relevant documents.²⁹

The IAEA report served to dispel fears that Iran may have been attempting to acquire a nuclear weapons capability. Overall, Iran's strategy of military deterrence is a defensive one. This involves restoring the conventional weapons capability of the armed forces to the point where they can maintain security along the country's land and sea borders and discourage foreign aggression. Simultaneously, total combined military personnel (air force, army, navy, and *pasdaran* [revolutionary guards]) have

been reduced to 350,000. Most pasdar units actually have been assigned non-military tasks, including responsibility for major dam, highway, and railroad construction projects. For the short term, at least, the Rafsanjani administration has decided this level of deterrence, combined with diplomatic efforts and support for Iraqi opposition groups, should be adequate to contain Iraq.

Covert Activities

Iran's suspicions of Saddam Husain's regional ambitions, as well as Baghdad's continued support of the Iranian opposition movement known as the Mojahedin-e Khalq, prompted Tehran to provide assistance for forces opposed to the Iraqi regime. The most favored group is the umbrella organization the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI), which has had its headquarters in Iran since 1982. SAIRI generally is regarded as a Shia Muslim political force which has a strong ideological affinity to the Islamic Republic. Both of SAIRI's primary components, the Ad Dawah al Islamiyah (Islamic Call) party and the Organization of Islamic Action are headed by prominent Iraqi Shia clergymen.³⁰ Iran naturally is sympathetic to SAIRI's objective, which is to establish an Islamic government in Iraq. However, Saudi Arabia, and to a lesser extent the other GCC countries, are alarmed by the prospect of a Shia-dominated regime coming to power in Baghdad and aligning itself with the Shia-dominated government in Tehran. To forestall such an eventuality, Saudi Arabia, whose own government can be described appropriately as Islamic fundamentalist, has provided covert aid to various Iraqi opposition groups which are as much preoccupied with undermining the appeal of SAIRI as they are with overthrowing Saddam Husain.

Since 1990, it has been the Iranians who have recognized most clearly the roles their own and Saudi support have played in perpetuating the divisive factions among the Iraqi opposition. Convinced that the opposition's failure to unify has helped Saddam maintain his power, Iran has encouraged SAIRI to participate in alliances with the numerous ethnic, religious, and secular parties that have been organized among Iraqi dissidents living in Lebanon, Syria, and other countries. Since its own rapprochement with Saudi Arabia, Iran also has been trying to persuade the kingdom to enter into

a dialogue with SAIRI. In early 1992, rumors circulating among Iraqi exiles that Saudi foreign ministry officials had initiated contacts with SAIRI proved well-founded when Riyadh undertook the unprecedented step of inviting SAIRI leaders to a Saudi-sponsored meeting of Iraqi opposition leaders.³¹

In addition to SAIRI, Iran also has supported opposition groups among Iraq's ethnic Kurds. In fact, militia of the two major Kurdish parties, the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, actually fought alongside Iranian forces during most of the Iran-Iraq War. Since the crushing of the popular uprisings in March 1991, Tehran has been convinced that the Kurds have demonstrated greater solidarity and more willingness to cooperate than Iraq's Arab parties, and thus constitute the more effective political challenge for Saddam Husain's government.³² However, Tehran is also ambivalent about the Kurdish cause. It generally backs the Kurds' professed aim of autonomy within Iraq, but it fears their ultimate intention is separation and independence, which Iran opposes.

Iran is fundamentally against the disintegration of Iraq. From Tehran's perspective, the break-up of Iraq into Arab and Kurdish states would pose a grave threat to the very integrity of Iran, 40 percent of whose population is comprised of ethnic minorities. Most Iranians suspect the loyalty of their country's own 4 million Kurds, who have a long history of disaffection from and rebellion against the central government, and they assume an independent Kurdistan right across the border would incite the latent separatist tendencies of Iranian Kurds. Such concerns are a powerful incentive not to provide the Iraqi Kurds with the kind of all-out assistance that might facilitate their complete freedom from Baghdad.

Central Asia

Iran considers the Central Asian region to its immediate north and east as a second strategic area where political instability potentially threatens its own security. Historically, Iran's interests in Central Asia superseded its interests in the Persian Gulf. Indeed, until the 19th century, Iranian cultural influence was pervasive throughout Central Asia, and Iran-based dynasties exercised political control

over much of the region. Over the centuries, peoples moved relatively freely in an area that had no fixed borders. The imposition of international boundaries by Tsarist Russia and the British Empire resulted in large minority populations of Armenians, Azerbaijanis, Baluchis, Tajiks, and Turkomen, as well as smaller groups of Hazaras, Kazakhs, Pathans, and Uzbeks, living in Iran.³³ The virtual cessation of ties between Iran/Afghanistan and Soviet Central Asia beginning in the 1920s represented an historical aberration. Iran's political leaders believe that the dissolution of the Soviet Union provides an opportunity to restore the region's traditional patterns of economic, social, and perhaps even political relationships. They perceive the region to be on the verge of an important historical threshold and welcome the chance to reassert Iranian influence; however, they also fear the possibility of the process adversely affecting Iran.

From Tehran's perspective three distinct conflicts require attention: the civil war in Afghanistan; the incipient national war between Armenia and Azerbaijan; and the incidents of inter-ethnic strife in the four republics east of the Caspian Sea. The situation in Afghanistan actually has preoccupied the Islamic Republic since its establishment in 1979. Throughout the nine-year Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan, Iran permitted resistance groups (*mujahidin*) to maintain training camps on Iranian territory and stage raids from these camps into Afghanistan. Iran also supplied military and material assistance to the guerrillas, although the extent of its aid was limited by the greater priority of prosecuting the war with Iraq.³⁴ After the Soviet Union withdrew its troops from Afghanistan in 1989, Iranian policy focused on negotiating a peaceful resolution of the civil war. Nevertheless, Tehran has been ambivalent about the UN proposal for mediated talks between the *mujahidin* and the Marxist government in Kabul. It believes the predominantly Shia *mujahidin*, which recruit followers from among the 2.5 million Afghan refugees living in Iran, should have a major role in any new Afghan government, but intense rivalries among the Shia groups have prevented them from uniting behind an effective strategy. In addition, Iran distrusts the more powerful and predominantly Sunni *mujahidin*, which are based in Pakistan. In particular, Iran has long opposed Gulbuddin

Hekmatyar's group, the Hezb-e-Islami. Policy analysts in Tehran contend that a Hekmatyar-controlled government in Afghanistan would result in substituting one form of political instability for another.³⁵

On the other side of Iran in the northwest, the escalating tension between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh has aroused concerns about the possibility of a major war. Tehran fears further deterioration of the conflict will invite foreign intervention and prompt thousands of civilian refugees to flee across the Aras River into Iran. The current level of strife already has interfered with normal trade and communications links. The Azerbaijani province of Nakhichevan, for example, is separated from the rest of Azerbaijan by Armenia. Nakhichevan also borders Iran, and the main railroad, highway, and oil pipeline from Iran to the Caucasus region passes through Nakhichevan. Armenia and Azerbaijan's mutual blockades have made these networks useless for commerce and forced Nakhichevan into economic dependence on Iran.

Even without the distraction of Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan is a problem for Iran. The existence of an independent Azerbaijan raises the prospect of Azerbaijani nationalism. A majority of Azerbaijanis actually live in Iran, most of them right across the border from Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijanis have long resented Persian cultural dominance. In the early 1920s, during World War II, and most recently in 1979-80, there were unsuccessful movements in Tabriz and other cities of Iranian Azerbaijan to obtain political autonomy from Tehran. Although some Persian clergy believe that a common religious heritage will induce Azerbaijan to seek reunification with Iran, other politicians fear just the opposite, that an independent Azerbaijan will eventually make irredentist claims against Iranian Azerbaijan.

Tehran also is wary about the political situation to its northeast, that is, in Turkmenistan on its border, and beyond in Kazakhstan, Krygyistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. These states are controlled by secular governments that, in Iran's view, are merely dressed up versions of the communist regimes that ruled under the Soviets. Iranian officials have not been able to establish rapport with counterparts in these countries, and Central Asian leaders reportedly are suspicious of Iranian interest in

nascent Islamic movements.³⁶ Some policy analysts in Tehran have expressed concern that if pan-Turkism proves to be a stronger force than pan-Islamism, such a development could threaten Iranian national security. Although not explicitly stated, their fear is that some form of Turkish ethnic solidarity might appeal to Iran's own Turkomen minority. In addition to these worries, the incidents of ethnic strife in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in 1990 and 1991 aroused Iranian concerns about overall political stability in the region.

Iran was more ambivalent than enthusiastic about the prospect of independence for the Central Asian republics. Indeed, during the fall of 1991, some Tehran papers argued that the Soviet Union could not agree to the republics becoming independent without consultation with Iran, because the former Russian Empire had forcibly seized the region in the nineteenth century. While this was not a widespread view, it did reflect anxiety about the politics of Central Asia. Nevertheless, the Central Asian republics achieved their independence more swiftly than they or Iran expected; the numerous and valuable commercial links from the Soviet period forced Tehran to recognize the new political reality faster than it may have preferred. Thus, in January 1992, Iran followed the example of neighbor Turkey and established formal diplomatic ties with the new states. Iran also agreed with Pakistan and Turkey to admit these countries into the regional trade agreement, the Economic Cooperation Organization, which they had established in 1985.

Conclusions

Iran's security policies can be summarized as aimed at the containment of potential political instability in the Persian Gulf and Central Asian regions. In comparison to the 1980s, when Iran distrusted most governments and sought allies among various Islamic movements opposed to established authorities, the emphasis now is on strengthening diplomatic ties with neighboring regimes irrespective of their ideological character.

Iran's determination to establish friendly and cooperative relations with its neighbors is propelled by security fears, primarily of Iraq. Tehran's containment of Iraq strategy actually is similar to the policy Iran and the Arab monarchies shared during the 1970s. Indeed, some scholars see Iranian foreign

policy following historic patterns as dictated by the country's geographic location.³⁷ In a certain sense, Iran's strategic position requires that any government pay close attention to the Persian Gulf.

However, interest in regional developments is affected by factors other than geostrategic considerations. For Iran, ideology became a strong motive for its regional policy after 1979. These ideological imperatives resulted in a radical change from policies pursued in the pre-revolutionary days, when Iran's shah accepted the role as an American agent in maintaining the regional political *status quo*. The revolutionary regime took the lead in upsetting that stability. Indeed, the shah's former allies, the Gulf Arabs, viewed the main purpose of the eight year Iran-Iraq War to be the containment of Iran, which posed as much of an ideological threat to Iraq as it did to the Arab monarchies. During the last three years, however, ideology has receded as a motive force in Iranian foreign policy. Now, a mutual fear of Iraq has once again found Iran and the Arabs of the GCC countries sharing similar security concerns.

Endnotes

1. This analysis of Iranian attitudes about their national security is based on interviews with Iranian officials and analysts conducted in this country and Europe over the past 30 months and a review of editorials, interviews, and speech transcripts in various Tehran newspapers including *Abrar*, *Etelaat*, *Jomhuri-ye Islami*, *Kayhan*, *Resalat*, and *Salaam*.

2. This paper focuses on external threats to Iran's security. National security also is affected by domestic economic, political, and social forces, but an assessment of various internal threats is beyond the scope of this paper.

3. The most insightful analysis of Iraq's motives for initiating the war with Iran is Phebe Marr, "The Iran-Iraq War: The View from Iraq," in *The Persian Gulf War: Lessons for Strategy, Law, and Diplomacy*, ed. Christopher C. Joyner (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1990), 59-62.

4. Western Iran sustained extensive destruction of civilian and industrial infrastructure during the war. For an excellent analysis of the economic damage see Kamran Mofid, "Iran: War, Destruction and Reconstruction," in *After the War: Iraq, Iran and the Arab Gulf*, ed. Charles Davies (Chichester, England: Carden Publications Ltd., 1990), 117-130.

5. The major battles of the Iran-Iraq War are examined in Edgar O'Ballance, *The Gulf War* (London: Brassey's Defense Publishers, 1988).

6. The impact of war on Iranian society and diplomacy is examined in my article, "Iran and the Gulf War," *Middle East Report*, no. 148 (September-October 1987): 13-18.

7. The internationalization of the Iran-Iraq War is examined by Gary Sick, "Slouching toward Settlement: The Internationalization of the Iran-Iraq War, 1987-1988," in *Neither*

East nor West: Iran, the Soviet Union, and the United States, ed. Nikki Keddie and Mark Gasiorowski (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 219-245; for an analysis of Iranian reaction to the US naval intervention see R.K. Ramazani, "Iran's Resistance to US Intervention in the Persian Gulf," 36-52.

8. See further James A. Bill, "The New Iran: Relations With Its Neighbors and the United States," *Asian Update* (New York: The Asia Society, 1991), 5-6.

9. The financial and other support the GCC countries provided Baghdad during the Iran-Iraq War is examined in Gerd Nonneman, *Iraq, the Gulf States & the War: A Changing Relationship 1980-1986 and Beyond* (London: Ithaca, 1986), 31-134.

10. Shortly after the success of the 1979 Revolution, some prominent revolutionaries began calling for an activist policy in support of Islamic political movements in the Persian Gulf and elsewhere. However, it was only after the charismatic leader Ayatollah Khomeini (1902-1989) had called for the peaceful export of revolution in a March 1980 public sermon that it became an official policy goal. For Khomeini's sermon see *Iran Times*, 28 March 1980.

11. On Iran's insistence that its export of revolution was only by peaceful means see R.K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 24-27.

12. See further Robin Wright, *Sacred Rage: The Wrath of Militant Islam*, revised Touchstone edition (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986), 111-172.

13. See further in Eric Hooglund, "The Persian Gulf," in *Intervention into the 1990s: US Foreign Policy in the third World*, ed. Peter Schraeder (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1992), chapter 18, 15-16.

14. See further in Fred Lawson, *Bahrain: The Modernization of Autocracy* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989), 125.

15. In a remarkable interview in Europe during the summer of 1989, a senior advisor to the Iranian Foreign Ministry said to me: "The Persian Gulf is our front yard. But we don't own it. We share it. We've got to be good neighbors.... I believe in the Revolution. It would be good for other countries, at least some (of them). But now we know that the Arabs (of the GCC states) think we're interfering in their affairs. We're against foreign intervention. That's what our Revolution was all about.... If we do things to export our revolution, then they're right ... we're the foreigners who are intervening in their countries. It took us a long time to understand this.... We were young and inexperienced, but now we understand.... Of course, we have our *tondrows* (extremists), but they don't have any real power now, they just talk a lot."

16. Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Ali Besharati is one of the principal architects of Iran's policy of normalizing relations with the GCC countries. An interview with him in the Dubai (UAE) paper *Al Khaleej* provides insight about the rationale for the Iranian decision to accept, albeit reluctantly, the GCC defense agreements with the United States. The Persian text of his remarks and an English translation are in *Iran Times*, 17 January 1992.

17. Interview, November 1991.

18. *Washington Post*, 7 January 1992.

19. The proposed budget for the fiscal year beginning 21 March 1993 allocates only three percent of projected government expenditures to the Ministry of Defense, the lowest amount since

1980. However, some military expenses, in particular the purchase of arms, may be included in separate, classified accounts.

20. Although Tehran to date has declined to return the Iraqi planes that flew to western Iranian airfields in 1991, they have remained parked were they landed. No Iranian pilots are trained to fly them, and Iran has no spare parts, logistics systems, or maintenance manuals for them.

21. For an example of alarmist accounts about Iran's rearmament, see the article by Jack Nelson, "Arms Buildup Making Iran Top Gulf Power," in the *Los Angeles Times*, 7 January 1992, 1 and 12.

22. Although Iran and the Soviet Union publicized the economic aspects of their 1989 agreement, neither country disclosed details about the pact's security aspects. Intelligence sources have calculated the sum of \$1 billion *per annum* based on the value of military hardware that Iran announced had been delivered in 1990 and 1991.

23. *Iran Times*, 31 January 1992.

24. On Iran's acquisition of Russian submarines see the interview with Director of Naval Intelligence Rear Admiral Edward Sheaffer, Jr., in the *Chicago Tribune*, 24 January 1992.

25. *Iran Times*, 7 February 1992.

26. For details of the Iran-Ukraine economic agreement, see *Iran Times*, 1 and 14.

27. For a summary of Iraq's extensive but secret program see Alan George, "Unquenched Nuclear Ambition," *The Middle East*, no. 206 (December 1991): 5-8.

28. The Bushehr atomic power plant was originally being constructed by a private Japanese firm. It was about 60 percent completed in 1979 when the revolution interrupted construction. During the Iran-Iraq War, Iraqi planes bombed the facility several times; these raids persuaded the Japanese to pull out of the project. Completion of the plant is one of the priorities of the Rafsanjani administration, although no country has agreed to assist with this project.

29. For a summary of the IAEA report see *Iran Times*, 21 February 1992.

30. For more details about SAIRI see Eric Hooglund, "Government and Politics," in *Iraq: A Country Study*, ed. Helen Metz (Washington: Library of Congress, 1990), 198-199.

31. See further *Washington Post*, 24 February 1992, A11, A18.

32. On the efforts of Kurdish opposition leaders to seek political alliances with Iraqi Arab dissidents see Eric Hooglund, "The Uprisings' Fundamentals Aren't Religious," *Newsday*, 17 March 1991, 43, 46.

33. For an overview of Iran's ethnic diversity, see Eric Hooglund, "Society and Its Environment," in *Iran: A Country Study*, ed. Helen Chapin Metz (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1989), 83-97.

34. Iran actually may have ceased providing arms to the Afghan resistance as early as the autumn of 1986; see Olivier Roy, "le Facteur Chiite dans la Politique Extérieure de l'Iran," *Central Asian Survey* 9, no 3 (1990): 70.

35. See further *Iran Times*, 6, 13, and 20 September 1991.

36. David Hoffman, "Power Competition in Central Asia," *Washington Post*, 14 February 1992, A33.

37. These views are developed in Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran and the World: Continuity in a Revolutionary Decade* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 1-45.

New Relationships Between Central and Southwest Asia: Regional Politics of Pakistan

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Introduction

During the crucial three year period (1989-1991) which witnessed the unravelling of the Soviet Union, Pakistan was primarily preoccupied with its own internal political dynamics. After General Zia died in an air crash in August 1988, elections were held in November 1988. Benazir Bhutto, leader of Pakistan's Peoples' Party, became Prime Minister. After nearly 20 chaotic months of her centrist government, she was dismissed by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan in the first week of August 1990. An interim government under Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi was installed which organized new elections. Islamic Democratic Alliance (IDI) Chief Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif was elected Prime Minister in November 1990.

Ten weeks after the Bhutto government's induction into office, the Soviet Union completed its withdrawal from Afghanistan by 15 February 1989. This was in accordance with the Geneva Accords, which had been negotiated by the Zia regime and were signed in April 1988. However, Zia's Minister of Foreign Affairs had been retained by Bhutto as a watchdog of Pakistan's policy toward Afghanistan. Maintaining close collaboration with the United States was the primary focus of Bhutto's foreign policy. Actually, during Zia's 11 year rule, Pakistan's foreign policy toward the USSR was exclusively devoted to achieving the roll-back of Soviet power from Afghanistan with the support of the US, China, and Saudi Arabia. Consequently, Pakistan lost touch with the internal dynamics of

Soviet politics, especially in former Soviet Central Asia.

Within Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there are no more than one or two diplomats who know the Russian language or can claim credible levels of expertise on the former Soviet Union. Pakistan did not maintain until 1991 even a single consulate general in Central Asia. No Pakistani diplomat has been meaningfully exposed to the cultural, religious, and political environments of the Central Asian republics; not a single Pakistani diplomat has any proficiency in any variety of the Turkic languages spoken in five out of the six Muslim republics. Lack of knowledge and absence of touch with Central Asia in Pakistan's Foreign Office is appalling. Consequently, during this crucial three year period (1989-1991), there has been no planning or even constructive thinking about the disintegration of the Soviet Union or the rise of independent and sovereign states in Central Asia. In the Foreign Office, merely the suspicion of having interest or a positive attitude toward the Soviet Union or suspicion of being less pro-American could have spelled disaster for a Pakistani diplomat's career.

In November 1990, when the Nawaz Sharif government came to power, it immediately confronted the Gulf crisis and the US-led war against Iraqi aggression in Kuwait. After the start of hostilities on 15 January 1991, public opinion split three ways: 1) the PPP and Jamaat-i Islami, which has been traditionally close to Saudi Arabia, led protest marches against the United States and the Nawaz Sharif government; 2) Pakistan's military distanced itself from the Prime Minister because the United States had suspended aid in October over the issue of Pakistan's nuclear program; 3) Prime Minister Sharif then undertook an unsuccessful tour

of several Middle East states in order to demonstrate that his government, while retaining fidelity to the US, was also interested in preventing war between Iraq and the United States.

Once the cease-fire took place in Iraq, Pakistan, as usual, became engrossed in the issues of the Afghan conflict: how to achieve a military or negotiated victory for the mujahidin over the Moscow-installed government in Kabul, and the repatriation of the Afghan refugees. US pressures on Pakistan also increased on the nuclear issue, and fears began to grow in Pakistan that the US, now the only superpower of the contemporary state system, might undertake destructive and punitive actions against Pakistan's nuclear installations. Against this background, on 6 June 1991, Sharif finally gave a fairly extensive address on foreign policy to the National Defense College in Rawalpindi. He professed Pakistan's friendship with China, Japan, the Arab states, Iran, Turkey, and states in the Pacific region. Finally, he discussed relations with the United States, with which Pakistan has "a history of friendship going back to the 1950s." Sharif then revealed the heart of his foreign policy initiative: a proposal to the US, the USSR, and China to help broker a nuclear nonproliferation pact between Pakistan and neighboring India.¹

In this speech, the USSR appeared only once as a part of this nuclear nonproliferation proposal. From 6 June to 19 August 1991, when the coup attempt was aborted in Moscow, the Nawaz Sharif government did not reflect any overt concern about the USSR. The Foreign Office was led by a competent secretary general, who was assigned the status of Minister of State. Moreover, on 11 September, a member of the National Assembly, Mohammad Siddiq Khan Kanju, was also designated Minister of State, while Nawaz Sharif retained the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under his personal control. However, no foreign policy initiative, especially in regard to the highly destabilized and fast splintering Soviet Union, surfaced. Critics began to make uncharitable comments about Sharif's "lack of interest" in foreign affairs, and the absence of "understanding of anything outside of Model Town, Lahore."²

While the Sharif government was slow to comprehend the political dynamics in the Soviet Union and the consequences of its disintegration to Pakistan's security, informed public opinion and the

print media reflected profound sensitivity to the developments in Central Asia. Also, Pakistan's GHQ, under Chief of the Army General Staff General Aslam Beg, established a "cell" to closely watch the developments in Central Asia. General Beg retired on 17 August 1991, but some of the geopolitical ideas he had inspired in Islamabad percolated gradually into the press and informed segments of Pakistani society's consciousness.

During the last 45 years, both the United States and the Soviet Union attached a great deal of importance to Pakistan's geostrategic location. It adjoins China's Xinjiang province, is separated from Tajikistan by the 11 by 31 miles of the Wakhan Corridor, and shares common borders with Afghanistan, Iran, and India. Also, Pakistan's Karachi and Gawader ports provide a maritime outlet to the Arabian/Persian Gulf states. The Gulf War and the collapse of the USSR have created a new perception in Pakistan, convincing the policy-makers that these two developments have diminished Pakistan's geostrategic importance in American eyes. Concomitantly, this sense of loss is made up by the realization that Pakistan's significance for the Central Asian republics has greatly increased. Pakistanis have started viewing Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, and the Central Asian republics as part of Pakistan's natural habitat.

Projection of Future Relationships

Three views, spotlighting the future of Pakistan's place in the complex of Southwest and Central Asian states, have emerged: 1) the so-called Beg doctrine; 2) an exceptionally imaginative paradigm of commonwealth consisting of the countries of Southwest and Central Asia; and 3) the Nawaz Sharif government's reluctant and hesitant pragmatic policy, which has followed informed public opinion, rather than offering a resourceful and cohesive foreign policy endeavoring to mold new dynamics in this region.

The Beg Doctrine. General Beg's perception of US security policy and its war to disgorge Kuwait from Iraq's jaw was less than benign. Also, he miscalculated US military capability in fighting a short war to victory against Saddam Husain. He saw another Vietnam for America developing on the arid lands of Iraq. On 24 January 1991, he presented an

anti-American thesis to a meeting of senior army officers condemning the allied invasion of Iraq. General Aslam's position conflicted with Prime Minister Sharif's essentially pro-American policy and earned him the charge of a new scheming Bonapart.

The media embellished General Beg's anti-American pronouncements and added several strands to it, popularizing it as the Beg doctrine. This so-called doctrine postulated rampant anti-Americanism, the revival of a regional cold war necessitating a strategic consensus with "Iran, Afghanistan, China, and even the Central Asian state."³ When the 19 August 1991 coup in Moscow was aborted, the Beg doctrine was discredited. Gorbachev lost his grip on the USSR, which began to unravel swiftly, and the United States emerged as the only superpower on the horizon.

The positive side of the Moscow coup for Pakistan was the crippling of the three pillars of support to India and the Moscow-installed government in Kabul: the KGB, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), and the Soviet military. These collateral benefits are not insignificant for Pakistan's security. Also, in September 1991, the United States and Russia agreed to cut off arms supplies to the Kabul Government and the mujahidin beginning 1 January 1992.⁴ Subsequently, the Russians withdrew their demand for a role for President Najibullah, and also admitted culpability for their illegal, as well as immoral, invasion of Afghanistan. The conflict in Afghanistan, however, still continues.

The decline of the USSR is a serious blow to India's industrial development, international trade with the former Soviet Union on exceptionally favorable terms, and military preparedness. The USSR was India's enthusiastic partner in dominating the Indian Ocean to the detriment of Pakistan's security. For nearly 35 years, India had anchored foreign and security policy in Moscow, and now finds itself groping for a new sense of direction. India is also looking in the direction of Central Asia, hoping to emerge as a major trading partner with the Muslim republics.

A Paradigm of Commonwealth of Southwest and Central Asian States. This paradigm is projected by the Pakistan Central Asia Friendship Society, which draws to its forum some outstanding

academics, retired military officers, and businessmen. This Society has conducted several workshops at Peshawar and Islamabad in cooperation with the Center of Central Asian civilizations of the Quaid-i-Azam University at Islamabad and the Area Study Center of Peshawar University.

The Society's futuristic planning is based upon certain reasonable assumptions. It builds a political structure on the basis of the hard economic realities confronting Pakistan, Iran, and the Central Asian states. First, the world economy is visualized as multipolar, and each pole is perceived to be "protective and exclusionary." Second, one of the poles is "fortress Europe" or the European Economic Community (EEC), which like a magnet is drawing the East European countries. In Gorbachev's political language, this is the European space to which Russia would want to belong after shedding its Eurasian character. A third economic pole more likely to be exclusionary is the collection of 12 Pacific Rim states, which by the end of the twentieth century is "expected to control half of all international trade." Fourth, and finally, the Gulf Cooperative Council (GCC) under the "protective" wings of Saudi Arabia which, though lacking in military capability, is devoted to developing a sub-Arab space in the Gulf region. The GCC countries have abolished visa requirements for each others' citizens and recognize diverse licensing practices. This mini-Arab world is not expected to accept Pakistan in the free movement of peoples, money, and goods.

What are Pakistan's options? The Society's answer is to carve out a new regional market *à la* ECC or Commonwealth, consisting of six Central Asian States, Iran, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Pakistan, and China's province of Xinjiang. The concept is difficult to implement but not outlandish. A rereading of history is called for. Before the British and Russian imperialisms erected iron curtains in the nineteenth century around these states, trade among them flourished, exchange of scholars and literary accomplishments was extensive, and the transfer of technical know-how was not restrained.

Evidently, the Society's strategic planners are aware of the "dangers" of this non-Arab Pan-Islamic orientation. The West might equate it with militant Islam or Islamic fundamentalism. Extremism in the name of religion might lead the West, including

Russia, to replace the old containment of Communism with a policy of "containment of Islam." The emphasis, therefore, in the Society's formulations is the Islamic modernism of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) and the Poet-Philosopher, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938). This Commonwealth is to be "a tolerant modern alliance of ethnic brotherly Muslim peoples." Moreover, the Society perceives the current Islamic resurgence in Central Asia not as the revival of Islamic fundamentalism, but clearly as "ethnocultural movements" spawned by "economic self-interest." Quite accurately, the Society perceives in the same light Islamic resurgence among former autonomous socialist republics of Tatarstan, Chechen-Ingushetia, Dagestan, and Kabardino-Balkar, which are located in the Russian federation.

Why is Turkey left out of this paradigm, despite Turkey's ethnic and linguistic affinity with Central Asia and territorial contiguity, like Iran, with the Republic of Azerbaijan? The Society assesses Turkey's admission to the EEC as "imminent." Historically, this has been the Republic of Turkey's secular ambition, while Turkic heritage should have drawn it toward Central Asia. Turkey's model of a secular "Muslim polity" has an attraction for some of the Communist turned nationalist leaders of Central Asian republics, and Turkey has begun to respond to them positively. Turkey is a powerful regional state and cannot be so lightly read out.

The inclusion of Xinjiang in the proposed commonwealth is not only an intriguing idea, but a practical necessity, if transportation arteries are to remain unclogged between Central Asia and Pakistan. A network of railroads must be established from the Caspian Sea to Xinjiang and from there to Karachi; Baluchistan and Afghanistan are to be connected with Central Asia. In view of Pakistan's cooperative relations with China, Xinjiang may remain under Chinese sovereignty, yet be allowed by Beijing in her own national interest to be an active member of the proposed Commonwealth. Kashgar in Xinjiang would then become a trijunction, where trade routes from Gilgit and Hunza in Pakistan, from the Wakhan Corridor in Afghanistan, and from Central Asia would converge.⁵

Needless to say, Afghanistan and Xinjiang are essential links in the proposed commonwealth. Afghanistan's ethnic, historical, and political

relations with Pakistan are too well known, although from 1947-1979, successive Afghan governments under the influence of the Soviet Union and India pursued antagonistic irredentist policy which came to be known as the demand for Pashtunistan. Thanks to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and India's support of the Soviet installed regimes in Kabul, the Pashtunistan problem has been set aside. The new Afghan government which would emerge as a consequence of settlement with the mujahidin, is expected to maintain fraternal and cooperative relations with Pakistan, which would be in harmony with the mujahidin's Islamic ethos.

However, Xinjiang's Islamic-national aspirations need to be appreciated. The Muslim-Turkic peoples of Xinjiang (called until recently Sinkiang, the new Province), have more in common ethnically and linguistically with the Turkic Central Asians than with the Han Chinese. Their present demographic picture is presented in Table 1.

Although made a province of China in 1884, Xinjiang has been penetrated by China since the 1750s, much like the Russian expansion in Central Asia. Finally, the two imperial powers stabilized their conquests by virtue of the Treaty of Torbagatai (1864) and the Treaty of St. Petersburg (1881). Since the Chinese annexation of Xinjiang, several Muslim uprisings erupted against the Chinese overlordship. The Khanate of Kokand (now in Uzbekistan) was the main source of support for the rebels.⁶

The mid-nineteenth century rebellion of Muhammad Yaqub Beg, who proclaimed himself Khan of Eastern Turkistan in 1869, succeeded in "winning some degree of British and Turkish recognition of his position as an independent ruler during 1873-74."⁷ However, the latest rebellion

Table 1: Turkic-Muslim Demographic Picture		
Turkic-Muslim Ethnic Group	1990 Census	Geographic Location
1. Uighur	7,214,431	Xinjiang (1-5)
2. Kazakh	1,111,718	2-5 have republics in Central Asia. Uighurs also scattered in Central Asian republics.
3. Kyrgyz	141,549	
4. Uzbek	14,502	
5. Tatar	4,873	
Total	8,487,073	

Source: State Statistical Bureau, Beijing Review (52/1990), 30.

erupted in November 1944 near the Sino-Soviet border in the Ili Valley. The Muslims declared the establishment of Eastern Turkistan Republic (ETR) to oust all Chinese from Turkistan, which the Chinese then called Sinkiang. ETR's government proclaimed its foreign policy program on 15 July 1946, committing to "improve relations with all Muslim nations (including the Central Asian republics) on the basis of commonly shared religious belief and culture."⁸ Finally, when the Chinese Red Army entered Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang, in October 1949, ETR ceased to exist.

However, Xinjiang has not been completely pacified or reconciled to Chinese overlordship. In April 1990, unrest erupted again "around the legendary Silk Road city of Kashgar, not far from the border with Afghanistan and the [former] Soviet Union,"⁹ that is, along the border with Tajikistan. This is precisely the area where the Eastern Turkistan Republic had originated and had the most common grassroots support from 1944-49. This time, the Chinese government banned all tourists and foreign correspondents from Xinjiang for several months in 1990. In mid-September 1990, China's Xinjiang Administration promulgated draconian regulations forbidding Muslim *Ulama* (religious teachers) to meet foreigners or teach in the mosques the history of *Jihad* (Holy War). The Administration blamed the Islamic Party of East Turkistan for inciting "counter-revolutionary armed rebellion" in Xinjiang. Practically, the ban included any chance encounter a Xinjiang *alim* might have with Afghans, Pakistanis, or Muslim natives of the Central Asian republics who frequently visit Xinjiang.

Turkic-Muslim population in Xinjiang not only suffered religious persecution under the Mao Zedong regime but had to adopt Latin script, discarding historically established Arabic script for their language, while the Han Chinese retained their own traditional Chinese script.¹¹ Chinese religious and cultural policy has not been better than the Soviet repression in Central Asia, and the consequences of these policies have been very similar in the form of Islamic resurgence and aspirations for political independence.

Sino-Pakistani relations since the Communist takeover in Beijing have progressed into strategic collaboration, especially after the Sino-Indian border war of 1962. This is symbolized by the 774

km long Kara Kuram Highway which links Xinjiang with Islamabad through Hunza and Gilgit. Jointly conceived and funded by China and Pakistan in 1968, its construction was completed in 1982. Pakistan's strategic artery of transportation has thus been connected to Kashgar and Urumqi, and through this route to Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan.

Pakistan Central Asian Friendship Society's proposal to connect Xinjiang to Peshawar with a railroad system is practically impossible to achieve in view of the difficult mountainous terrain of Gilgit and Hunza through which the railroad must pass. A much more feasible and alternative link would be an all-weather highway linking Chitral in Pakistan to Tajikistan through the 11 by 30 miles of the Wakhan Corridor. This, however, must await the emergence of a new Islamic-national government in Kabul.

The Society has offered several proposals for the consideration of the proposed Commonwealth countries; they can be implemented if Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Xinjiang, Pakistan, and the Central Asian republics can coordinate their diplomacy and economic policy. These proposals include: (1) rail and air links; (2) tourism; (3) free movement of goods; (4) joint programs in health, narcotic control, and environmental protection; (5) exchange of scholars and university students; (6) exchange of technologies; (7) mutual investment and banking; (8) cooperation in TV and radio programming; (9) establishing of telecommunications; (10) joint exploration of gas and oil; (11) joint development of power grids; and, last but not least, (12) eliminating visas to facilitate mobility.¹²

Historical Landscape of Regional Planning

Pakistan Central Asia Friendship Society's proposed commonwealth did not grow out of an intellectual vacuum. Its importance, however, lies in its grassroots origin, and it addresses the emerging problems of Central Asia, along with that of Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Clearly, this proposal is free from the Cold War syndrome. However, India has loomed very large in its formulations. In the 1950s and in the 1970s, the United States and Iran toyed with the following proposals: 1) Afghanistan-Pakistan (Con)-Federation; and 2) the Shah of Iran's scheme for a Common Market.

Afghanistan-Pakistan (Con)-Federation. During 1953-54, the strong proponents of confederation or federation between the two countries were former US Vice President Richard Nixon and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Radford. After visiting Pakistan and Afghanistan in December 1953, Nixon was firmly convinced of Pakistan's geostrategic significance in Southwest Asia. He was determined, like President Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, to keep Afghanistan out of Soviet orbit. Primacy, however, was attached to Pakistan as a linchpin state in the containment of the Soviet Union. India's firmly aligned foreign policy was rightly perceived as not supportive of US strategy. Dulles was a fervent supporter of Pakistan but was less enthusiastic about the prospects of an Afghanistan-Pakistan Federation. Moreover, Washington believed that if the Soviet Union invaded Iran, Pakistan would be drawn into general war. Ostensibly neutral, Pakistan's neutralism lacked "the doctrinaire quality of India."

However, Afghanistan's antagonistic policy toward Pakistan, encouraged by India, was problematic for the US policy of containment. The US National Security Council proposed in February 1954: 1) the US must make quite clear to Afghanistan its policy of discouraging Afghanistan's Pashtunistan claims against Pakistan; and 2) the US must dampen Afghan expectations of US military assistance. Finally, in order to find a stable solution to the Afghan-Pakistan tensions, the National Security Council at its 228th meeting on 9 December 1954 thoroughly discussed the possibility of a federation or confederation between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Taking the lead in these discussions, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Radford, emphasized the prospects of a federation between Afghanistan and Pakistan. There was a real chance that "such [a] federation would come about, and it would be a great stroke from the US point of view." Radford saw two major obstacles: the Afghan royal family's opposition and Indian propaganda. Otherwise, he believed, the Afghan people "would be inclined to favor confederation." Enthusiastically supporting Radford, Vice President Nixon saw "the opposition to federation concentrated in the small oligarchy which ran Afghanistan." In Nixon's judgment, "there were many more considerations

that brought Afghanistan and Pakistan together than divided them." To Nixon, Islam was "a potential bond" in addition to other geostrategic considerations. Known for his brinkmanship, Dulles was cautiously restrained in his support of (con)-federation or aid to Afghanistan. "The Soviets were inclined to look on Afghanistan much as the United States did on Guatemala." This statement summed up the limitations of US-Soviet confrontation in the Cold War.

With these confabulations in the background, firm policy guidelines were established: (1) should the Afghan and Pakistan governments demonstrate "a convincing mutual desire for confederation," the US should encourage and assist in its realization; (2) help to create favorable conditions for the settlement of the Pashtunistan dispute; (3) provide assistance for Afghanistan for those projects which would tend to strengthen its ties with Pakistan; (4) give military assistance to Afghanistan "through Pakistan if expedient;" and finally, (5) if the USSR attacked Afghanistan overtly, then attempts should be made "to obtain prompt withdrawal of Soviet forces," including action through the United Nations.¹³ Needless to say, neither Afghanistan nor Pakistan reflected any genuine desire for a (con)-federation between the two neighboring states. The plan was abandoned.

Common Market. After the Arab-Israeli War of 1973, when petro-dollars began to flow abundantly into Iran's treasury, the Shah became not only the *gendarme* for the Gulf, but also extended his interest for the security of the Indian Ocean right up to Australia. By 1977-78, the Shah projected his Common Market Scheme, including Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India. In 1972, India had won a Soviet supported war against Pakistan, and this humiliation still rankled deeply in Pakistan's psyche. This loss had further shaken Pakistan's self-confidence when in July 1977 popularly elected Prime Minister Zulfikar Bhutto was overthrown in a *coup d'état* by General Zia-ul Haq. The Shah of Iran had consequently developed a paternalistic attitude toward Pakistan, declaring that Pakistan's territorial integrity was of paramount importance to Iran. The Common Market, including India, the Shah had reasoned, would encourage greater economic cooperation in the region, and indirectly strengthen Pakistan's security.

In pursuit of this policy, the Shah extended several hundred million dollars of project aid to India in 1978. For Pakistan, the Shah offered guarantees to Citibank of New York for a \$300 million loan and agreed to a two-year delay in the start of the repayment for a \$580 million Iranian loan. However, the Shah bluntly told General Zia that if Pakistan expected additional economic assistance, its economic performance had to improve. To wean Afghanistan away from the Soviet Union, the Shah committed almost two billion dollars in project aid. While this economic generosity was not unwelcome to Pakistan, the Shah's political approach was most galling. In order to facilitate Iran's import and export with India, the Shah wanted the utilization of Pakistan's transit facilities by both Iran and India. When Pakistan pleaded the inadequacy of its transportation system, the Shah offered further financial assistance to upgrade Pakistan's highways and the railroads.

In 1978, the military regime of General Zia was quite fearful that at some point in the future "Iran and India might see it in their interest to cooperate to Pakistan's detriment." This assessment was reflected by Ambassador Arthur Hummel of the US Embassy in Islamabad in his confidential telegram (control number 2182) which he sent to the State Department on 10 February 1978 after the Shah's visit to Pakistan on February 5.¹⁴

In 1979, when the Pahlavi regime was toppled by the Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan's Ambassador in Tehran rushed to offer provisional Prime Minister Mahdi Bazargan Pakistan's recognition of his government on 12 February with this comment: "Pakistan viewed its relationship with Iran as fundamentally one of two peoples rather than just one of one government to another."¹⁵ However, the quest for the Common Market or regional cooperation was postponed for another decade because of the Iran-Iraq War of 1980-88 and initiated by Saddam Husain. In the wake of the aborted 19 August 1991 Soviet coup, the Central Asian republics became independent and sovereign and started to reorient their relations toward Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Xinjiang, and Pakistan. Political and economic imperatives in these states became the catalyst for new cooperative thinking in this vast region.

Among the Muslim states of Central Asia, Russian Federation and Southwest Asian fissional forces as

well as fusionist tendencies are visible in three concentric circles. Probably within three to five years, these dialectical tensions will resolve into stable pattern of state formations. At present, only these tendencies can be highlighted, and some efforts can be made to discern their directions.

In Central Asia and within the Russian Federation, Turkic and Iranian cultures have penetrated deeply. The latter is thoroughly reflected in Tajikistan. The third element, Islam, provides a threat of religious unity, not only within the former Soviet states, but also with Southwest Asia. Resurgent Islam is used for both national self-determination and regional cooperation. Exclusive and sectarian interpretation of Islam being offered in these states also leads to inter-Muslim and Muslim/non-Muslim conflicts, earning this process the less salutary description of "Islamic fundamentalism." Clearly, the historical forces which have operated within these states, especially the colonial rulers who splintered these populations into various ethnic states, cannot be ignored. Ethnic identities are now very much intertwined with territorial identities.

Federative Planning

Within the former Soviet Union, two tendencies are visible and may be described as Volga-Ural and Caucasian federative planning and Central Asian regional cooperative planning. In Southwest Asia, Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan are endeavoring to revive former cooperative, economic, and political programs; they have not coordinated their policies towards the states of the former Soviet Union. Saudi Arabia, using its vast financial resources, has moved to extend its influence and promote its brand of Islam.

The three regional states' cooperative planning must be analyzed to determine if it might lead to the development of a commonwealth of non-Arab Islamic states or more closely resemble the European Economic Community. Of course, after some initial enthusiasm for regional cooperation, these states may follow their own narrow national interests or even fall under the sway of powerful and resourceful exogenous states.

Volga-Ural and Caucasian Federative Planning. Twelve autonomous Muslim-Turkic republics are located in these two regions. Unlike

the 14 Soviet republics, they were constitutionally barred from exercising the right to secede from the USSR. Five of these autonomous republics (Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Udmurtia, Mariya, and Chuvashia) are in the Volga-Ural basin, and the seven autonomous republics, including Dagestan, Chechen-Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkar, Abkhazia, Adzharia, Karachaya-Cherkessia, Nakhichevan, and Kalmykia, are located in the Volga region and the Caucasus. Abkhazia borders Turkey but is within and under the jurisdiction of Georgia.

In 1989-90 when the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh (referred to as Artsakh by Armenians) was raging, its impact on Nakhichevan was explosive. The Popular Front organized the march on the border post with Iran, and barbed wire separating Nakhichevan from Iran was ripped out and scattered. People demanded restoration of contacts with Azerbaijanis in Iran. Azerbaijan's Popular Front demanded 600 million rubles from the Soviet government as compensation for the 40 years the use of the land was lost to the frontier system and its special equipment.¹⁶

Like Nagorno-Karabakh, Nakhichevan was gerrymandered into an autonomous republic. It has a 130 km border with Iran but is separated from Azerbaijan by interposing the Armenian territory between the two kindred populations. This territorial juggling continues to be a threat to Armenian boundaries and a constant source of conflict among the three states. For help, both Azerbaijan and Nakhichevan look to Turkey or Iran.

Another conflict erupted in 1991 in the autonomous Chechen-Ingush Republic (CIR). Conquered by the Russians in the mid-1800s, the area was given autonomous status in 1936 by Stalin, who combined the Chechen with Ingush population, both Ibero-Caucasians professing Sunni-Hanafi Islam. Currently, both number 1.3 million. On 2 November 1991, the CIR declared itself independent.

The events leading to the proclamation of independence reflected profound national grievances against Moscow. The Chechens, who are a majority in CIR, had been deported to Siberia from the Caucasus by Stalin during World War II. They were allowed to return only in 1957. After the deportation of the Ingush, their territories were transferred to North Ossetia. The movement for freedom from Moscow was launched by Dzhokhar

Dudayev, a former Soviet Air Force General and Commander of its unit in Estonia. He was born in 1944, in the mountains of Glancezhsky District just before his people were evicted from their homes. Clearly, the precedent of the Baltic states' independence and his national persecution, were the motivations for his commitment to self-determination.

Economic exploitation of the CIR is an additional negative incentive to separatism. Its substantial oil reserves are extracted and refined in the CIR but consumed elsewhere with no oil royalty accruing to the CIR. Of the CIR's 1.3 million population, more than 200,000 people are unemployed. In some localities, the unemployment rate is 80-90 percent.¹⁷ An appeal to Islam under these conditions has become a rallying cry and an urge to reach out to the larger world of Islam, what the Russians call Islamic fundamentalism, Muslim fanaticism, and intolerance of others. The public movements in CIR, including the Vainakh Democratic Party, the Islamic Path, the Green Movement, and the Peoples Front have supported CIR's nationalism.

Right in character, President Boris Yeltsin attempted to follow Moscow's historical role of suppression and the traditional but well-known policy of dividing Chechen from the Ingush. After Russian Vice President A. Rutskoi's visit to the CIR, the Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet decided on 9 October 1991 to authorize Moscow loyalist B.D. Bakhmadov (Chairman of the Provisional Supreme Council) to take the steps necessary to "stabilize the situation in the Republic." The Chechen National Congress (CNC) called this act "provocational" and Bakhmadov's appointment "a *coup d'état*, laying the groundwork for an armed incursion into the Republic."¹⁸

Defying Moscow, Dzhokhar Dudayev held elections in the CIR on 27 October 1991 and was elected President, with 85 percent of the vote. Yeltsin responded on 10 November by imposing emergency rule in the CIR and dispatched 600 troops to Grozny, the CIR's capitol, but these troops were blocked by nationalist forces at a military airport near Grozny. However, on 11 November, the Russian Parliament refused to endorse Yeltsin's order imposing emergency rule. The developments within the CIR from October to 11 November reveal the ethnic contradictions between Turkic-Muslim populations and their relations with Moscow.

The Ingush movement openly expressed dissatisfaction with Dudayev's tough policy, favoring preservation of the CIR as part of the Russian Federation. In tandem with this position, the Ingush demanded return of the territories which had been transferred to North Ossetia after their deportation to Siberia in 1944. In order to conduct negotiations with the Yeltsin government, an Ingush delegation was sent to Moscow on 13 October. Eight days later, the Ingush delegation returned from Moscow, where the territorial question was discussed with a delegation from North Ossetia and a commission of the Russian Federation's Supreme Soviet. The issue was resolved to Ingush satisfaction, except for the city of Vladikavkaz, a part of which the Ingush had demanded. In light of this development, a referendum among the Ingush people was held in the first week of December 1991: "73.7 percent of the 132,000 registered voters cast their ballots, and 92.5 percent of them voted for a sovereign Ingushetia within the Russian Federation."¹⁹

To further contain Dudayev's nationalism, the Terek Cossacks demanded a referendum on the question of shifting Naurskaya District of the CIR into Stavropol Territory, and the Cossacks of Shelkovskaya District took a similar position.²⁰ Thus, a wedge was driven between the Chechen and the Ingush, while the transplanted Russian Cossacks played Moscow's game. The Russian Parliament had acted wisely, while Yeltsin's actions might have started an interminable strife in the Caucasus.

Fired by the example of the CIR, the Balkars in the Kabardino-Balkar autonomous state proclaimed the Republic of Balkaria as a sovereign state within the framework of the Russian Federation. The Balkars, like the Chechen and Ingush peoples, were deported in 1944 to Kazakhstan and other Central Asian states. They lost half of their population in the process. Not until 34 years later after their return to their homeland did the Soviet government take any steps toward their rehabilitation. Balkars made no territorial claims on Kabardins since their territory was not transferred to another ethnic group, and no Kabardin village or town was built on Balkar land. Nevertheless, a problem may develop when they decide to redraw the borders of 1922, when the Balkars and Kabardins were united into one autonomous republic.²¹

By November 1991, political turmoil temporarily

simmered down in the Caucasus because the Russian Federation conceded independence to the Republics of former USSR, and found it practically impossible to enforce its edict in the autonomous republics. This situation, however, has not thwarted the onward march of nationalism in the Volga-Ural region's autonomous republics, especially in Tataristan. The spill-over impact of the Tatar national movement on Bashkortostan, Udmurtia, Mari, and the Chuvash is unavoidable.

Among the Turkic-Muslim nationalities, Tatars have historically played a very significant leading role in Russian history. Muslim-Tatars conquered Russia in 1237-40 and maintained their sovereignty over Russia for almost 250 years. They were finally defeated in 1480. Nevertheless, the Tatars retained parts of Russia and the Khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan. Kazan was conquered by the armies of Ivan IV in 1552. However, the Crimean Tatar Khanate survived until 1783. Under the Communists, the autonomous republic of Tataristan as a part of the Russian Federation was created with Kazan as its capitol. Stalin deported the Crimean Tatars in 1944 to Uzbekistan; 46.2 percent of them died during deportation. The Soviet Government falsely accused all of them of helping the German enemy during the war. The real reason for their deportation, Western scholars have since judged, was that "Russia coveted the semi-tropical lands of the Crimea occupied by the Tatars. Also, Russians harbored a deep, irrational distrust of them that stemmed from early history."²²

Steadily since 1989, Tataristan has attempted to break out of the Russian Federation. By December 1991, the Tatar national movement was in full swing with "passionate" adherents and "rational" opponents of complete independence from the Russian Federation. Among the supporters are: 1) the Tatar Public Center (TPC); 2) the Ittifak [alliance] National Independence Party; 3) the Suverenitet [sovereignty] Committee; and 4) the Tataristan Group of Deputies in the State's Supreme Soviet. Among the opponents are: 1) the Democrats, those who are positively oriented toward democratic Russian Federation; and 2) the Peoples Rule Faction in the Tatar Supreme Soviet. The current political dynamics are very similar to that of Ukraine and the Baltic states.

In Tataristan, Russian-Tatar population is supposed to be almost even, with a small numerical

edge in the Tatars' favor. Alarmed by rising Tatar nationalism, local Russians have started repeating the slogan of "the Kremlin under the Crescent" and demanding the Tatars' expulsion to Mongolia. Among the Tatars, on the other hand, slogans about Turkic unity are becoming increasingly popular. Tataristan is also concluding treaties with former autonomous and union republics to form a Volga-Urals Federation. However, Tataristan's incumbent President Mintimer Shaimiyev has taken a centrist position, emphasizing full "sovereign autonomy," within the framework of the Russian Federation. This moderate policy has exposed him to the opposing sides' scathing criticisms.

The thesis of the Volga-Urals Federation is being articulated by the leadership of the Ittifik National Independence Party led by Fauzia Bairamova, a Tataristan Peoples Deputy elected to the Tatar Supreme Soviet in 1990. She has already acquired an international reputation in the Islamic world, and the Iranian press has given exposure to her views. Like the Islamists in other Muslim countries, "her argument is that Islam is a religion which cannot be confined to private morality. It has a strong political component." However, like Islamic modernists elsewhere, she has argued that "women, even more than men, should be engaged in public activity, provided that their family lives [are] in order" and enjoy what she calls "inner harmony." To cleanse the combined impact of Russification and Sovietization, Bairamova founded the first unofficial Tatar journal in 1989. Called *Iman* (faith), the journal has argued for a regeneration of Tatar culture and Islamic practice. In her home village, there are 600 school children of whom six are Russian, yet, she revealed, all school lessons are taught in Russian. Why is this so, she lamented: "The Baltic Republics have only had 50 years within the Russian empire. We have had 440 years. We are deformed!"²³

In 1989, Bashkirs and Tatars celebrated for ten days in Ufa the 1110th anniversary of the adoption of Islam in the Volga and Ural areas, and the 200th anniversary of the inception of the Muslim spiritual administration of Muslims in the European part of Russia and Siberia. This administration was established in Ufa by a decree of Catherine II (1762-1796). To participate in these celebrations, representatives of the Muslim communities in the USSR and other countries, including Pakistan,

South Yemen, United Arab Emirates, Australia, and the United States, came to Ufa. Tataristan's government handed over the Azimov mosque in Kazan to the local Muslim community and allocated 450,000 rubles for its restoration. New mosques were authorized to be built in Naberezhniye Chelny, Nizhnekamsk, and Bugulma in Tataristan; Salavat and Ishimbai in Bashkiria; and in Ulyanov province.²⁴

To Bairamova, these salutary developments were not enough. In her eyes, the Tatar tragedy is that "the nation has lost its pride," otherwise would the Tatars "sell the Russians their language, customs and religion?" What is the Russian state? Historically correct, she has asserted that "half of Russia's territory is Tatar lands." Consequently, she has openly raised the question of annexing to Tataristan the lands that belonged to the Tatars of old: the lands of Simbirsk, Saratov, Samara, Astrakhand, and Orenburg, the expanses of the Ufa Plateau, and all of the Urals' western slope. The Siberian Tatars and the Sergach Mishars, in her eyes, are a special question: "their lands are also Tatar lands."²⁵

These aspirations are indeed very high! Should they be realized, then the Volga-Ural region would become contiguous to the North Caucasus republics, raising the possibility of a larger Turkic-Islamic federation on a grand scale. Recently impossible developments have taken place in the former Soviet Union which no one anywhere in the world had predicted. Who can, in light of recent history, call the possibility of a Volga-Ural-Caucasian Federation a pipe dream? However, the Chairman of the Russian Republic Parliament, Ruslan Imranovich Khasbulatov, a Chechen Muslim, whose family was deported in 1944 by Stalin, has contemptuously described the idea of Tataristan's independence from the Russian Federation as "rubbish." Khasbulatov, however, suggested that two referenda should be held in order to settle the issue of an autonomous republic's secession from the Russian Federation. The first referendum would be held in Tataristan, to be followed by a similar referendum in Russia. Only positive results in both can grant freedom to Tataristan. Accepting the challenge of this prescription, the Tataristan Supreme Soviet adopted in November 1991 a resolution proposing that a popular referendum will be held on the question of the "state status of the republic."²⁶ Its outcome, positive or negative, will

have profound impact on the future history of Tatars and Russians.

Central Asian Regional Planning: Responses from Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan

Despite the Communists and even some Western scholars' claims that the USSR had modernized and industrialized Central Asia, eliminated feudalism, and ushered in prosperity, recently Russian observers have openly admitted that half the families in Central Asia live in poverty. The average income per working person fluctuates between 40 and 60 rubles [a month]. The number of people living below the official poverty line is more than 46 percent in Uzbekistan, 40 percent in Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenia, and 60 percent in Tajikistan.²⁷

In addition to the widespread poverty which has fueled nationalism in the Central Asian republics, additional factors of Islamic repression, Russian political domination, cultural Russification, and enforced isolation from the Islamic world may be added to complete the picture. Communists turned nationalists almost overnight, the current Central Asian leaders certainly bring the legacy of Soviet authoritarianism to their rule. Recently, the Presidents of six republics were elected unopposed during 1990-91 with 95-98 percent of the votes. Failure of the Moscow-imposed command economy, the popular yearnings for self-determination, and more importantly, the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991, made these leaders nationalists. In Tajikistan, the former Communists recaptured power in September 1991 through elections and began to grope for new national policies. With Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus looking up to the United States and the West, the Central Asian leadership had no option left to them other than to seek aid and trade relations with Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan.

However, Azerbaijan's conflict with Armenia over the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh encouraged it to seek closer political and economic ties with Iran starting in 1990. In November, the two sides explored the possibility of establishing power plants, constructing a subway in Tabriz, and using Aras River waters for power generation. These modest steps reflected Iran's cautious approach in the wake of Hashemi Rafsanjani's 1989 visit to Baku, the Azerbaijani capitol, as a part of Tehran's

normalization of relations with Moscow, a process that began just before the death of Ayatollah Khomeini.

Even in January 1991, when Azerbaijan's Deputy Prime Minister accompanied by Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic's President visited Tehran to seek closer cooperation with Iran, he was forthrightly informed that Tehran would reciprocate within the framework of existing cooperation between Tehran and Moscow.²⁸ Within this established framework, Iran also signed agreements with Turkmenistan for border exchanges, agriculture, water resources and irrigation, the environment, solar energy, protection of cultural heritage, linguistics, literature, and the humanities.²⁹

In sensing a weakness of the Soviet center and recognizing the need for economic self-reliance, the Central Asian leaders congregated at Alma-Ata on 23 June 1990 and signed an intergovernmental agreement on scientific, economic, technical, and cultural cooperation between Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. This was probably the first major step collectively taken to initiate the process of regional planning in Central Asia. The agreement is to last until 1 January 1996 and included the following provisions: 1) establish a functioning business coordinating council with a group based in Alma-Ata; 2) establish an inter-republican commission to coordinate efforts to restore ecological balance in the Aral area; 3) establish a fund to aid the population of the ecological disaster zone; 4) form the inter-republican scientific and production association; and 5) remove the existing restrictions on the exportation of consumer goods. These practical measures were underlined by a statement which exuded an element of new Central Asian solidarity: "The peoples of Central Asia and Kazakhstan are united not only by their geographical neighborhood, but also by common historical destiny, by a kinship of cultures, traditions, and habits."³⁰

At Alma-Ata, these Central Asian leaders made another declaration, in which the inviolability of the existing territories of the republics was reaffirmed and the ecological tragedy caused by the disappearance of the Aral Sea was made the Soviet Union's responsibility. They asked President Gorbachev to establish an All-Union Ecological

Fund in order to restore balance in the Aral Sea region. Also, they recommended the transfer of a part of the Siberian River's flow to Central Asia.³¹ To strengthen multilateral cooperation, the Republican leaders agreed to meet annually.

Despite this big fusionist step, fissionist tendencies are also visible in Central Asia. Dreadful inter-ethnic riots occurred in 1990 along the Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan border. The violence left 200 people dead and embittered relations between the two neighbors. Uzbekistan, the most heavily populated Central Asian republic, began to be feared by what other republics called an expansionist tendency and historically rooted imperial tradition. Other presidents started to dismiss the idea of Central Asia unifying in a greater Turkistan as unreal. Moreover, the prospect of unified Turkistan and the resurgence of Islam is most frightening to the local Russian and other European nationalities. The current demographic picture of Central Asia is presented in Table 2.

Inter-ethnic riots involving Russians have not taken place yet; however, Russian and other European nationalities have started to stream out of the republics. From Kyrgyzstan alone, 74,000 left in the first six months of 1991.

At the present time, the Central Asian states are emphasizing regional cooperation rather than political unification. Kazakhstan President Nursultan A. Nazarbaev has been energetic and imaginative in expanding regional cooperation to included even the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region of China, mindful that more than one million Kazakhs live there and a substantial number of

Uighurs live in Kazakhstan. In the summer of 1991, Nazarbaev visited Xinjiang and offered two proposals for China's approval: 1) extending Alma-Ata Urumaqi air route, which opened two years ago, to Beijing, and even further to South Korea and Japan; 2) making more effective use of the railroad which links Russia and China and passes through Kazakhstan. In 1990, an international main line was linked together at the Druzhba (Russia) Alashankou (China) junction. For China, the railroad shortened the route from the Pacific to Europe by almost 5,000 km and also shortened Beijing-Moscow route. In this cooperative spirit, Kazakhstan's trade with Xinjiang has increased fivefold, and joint enterprises have begun to develop. Nazarbaev has presented to Iran a similar proposal for railroad construction, linking Iran with Kazakhstan. The railroad stretch would cover 320 km which will provide Kazakhstan access to the Middle East and the Mediterranean.³²

At this point in their history, the regional approaches of the Central Asian republics are constrained by their mixed demographic composition, erosion of Islamic cultural values, current leadership, which is steeped in the ethos of national communism, economic needs, and geopolitical imperatives.

By December 1991, the Central Asian republics rapidly began to develop relations with Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan. These three countries have had cooperative relations since the 1950s. They recently joined together to form the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), which superseded the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD),

Table 2: Muslim Central Asian Republics' Population, 1990

Republic	Population in Millions	Russians within the Republics	Other Nationalities within the Republics
Azerbaijan	7.1	6 %	6 % Armenians
Turkmenistan	3.6	10%	9 % Uzbeks; 3 % Kazakhs; 1 % Ukrainians
Uzbekistan	20.3	8 %	5 % Tajiks; 4 % Kazakhs
Tajikistan	5.3	8 %	24 % Uzbeks; 1 % Tatars; 1 % Kyrgyz; 1 % Ukrainians
Kyrgyzstan	4.4	22 %	13 % Uzbeks; 3 % Ukrainians; 2 % Germans
Kazakhstan	16.7	38 %	6 % Germans; 5 % Ukrainians; Kazakhs (40%) are a minority in their own historical homeland
Total	57.4		

Sources: "The Soviet Union's Unequal Parts: Diverse and Restless," *New York Times*, 11 September 1990; *Time*, 9 September 1991; *Statesman's Yearbook 1990*.

established in 1964. In June 1990, at the first tripartite ministerial session of the ECO, Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan signed a protocol to expand cooperation between various sectors of their societies and economies, including agriculture, industry and technology, science and culture, energy, transportation and communication, and related infrastructural projects. This revitalization of regional cooperation has elevated the ECO into a model of cooperation and regional planning to which the Central Asian republics can be drawn.³³

Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan present three different ideological orientations, while their economies, though roughly comparable, are at different levels of development. Turkey is a secular Muslim state with a population of 56.5 million, while its economy is growing at an annual rate of 5.3 percent. Militarily, Turkey is the strongest among the three partners. The Western powers are likely to encourage the Central Asian republics to draw closer to Turkey for aid and trade. With a population of 54.6 million, Shiite Iran is an Islamic Republic. While its foreign policy is national in orientation, Islam as an ideology is a major component in its foreign policy. Rich in oil, Iran has substantial economic resources to develop economically and maintain a credible military force which has already been battle-tested. Over populated with 110 million citizens, Pakistan is a conservative Islamic state, constantly struggling to maintain a balance between the application of Islamic principles in its state system, and the imperatives of modernity, emphasizing democracy, scientific-industrial development, and human rights.

In light of geography, economic needs, and the type of Islamic forces which could emerge in the Central Asian republics, they selectively developed relations with Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan. Some trends are noticeable at present. Even before the official dissolution of the USSR was declared on 8 December 1991, Kazakhstan's President Nazarbaev, Turkmenistan's President Saparmurat Niazov, and Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic's Prime Minister Beycan Ibrahimoglu visited Ankara and declared that they were looking toward Turkey's economic and social examples to follow and "needed Turkey to show the way."

Azerbaijan's Prime Minister Hasan Hasanov declared that Azerbaijan would welcome Turkey's mediation in its conflict with Armenia over the

disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh.³⁴ Responding to these developments, President Turgut Ozal of Turkey advised his government that "three important areas, the Balkans, the Caucasus, and the Middle East, have opened in front of Turkey."³⁵ Clearly, at present, the Caucasus is an area of geopolitical significance for Turkey, while it has extended diplomatic recognition to all Central Asian republics.

Iran has already developed extensive relations with Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan and extended recognition to all Central Asian republics. However, Iran's skillful diplomacy sprung into action at the Sixth Summit Meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), which ended 11 December 1991 at Dakar, Senegal. Iran was determined to set itself up as an alternative to Saudi Arabia as the world leader of Islam. Iran's President Hashemi Rafsanjani not only sponsored a proposal for admitting the Azerbaijan to the OIC, but also presented to the summit Azerbaijan delegates Sheikh ul-Islam Allah Shakkur Pasha-Zade (Chairman of the Spiritual Administration of Caucasian Muslims) and Kazakhstan Deputy Foreign Minister, Sailau Batyrshaurly. Incidentally, both Azerbaijani and Kazakh delegates flew into Dakar in the Iranian plane as members of Iranian delegations. Azerbaijan was accepted as a full member of the OIC.³⁶

Not to be left behind by its own public opinion and the diplomatic initiatives of Turkey and Iran, Pakistan also moved with determination to establish relations with the Central Asian republics, and especially with Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan sent a delegation in November 1991 to Pakistan, consisting of Sheikh ul-Islam Allah Shuker Pasha-Zade and Fazal Murad Ali, member of the Azerbaijani Supreme Soviet. The delegation visited Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on 20 November and urged him to extend diplomatic recognition to Azerbaijan. These Azerbaijani personalities also successfully attempted to mobilize Pakistani public opinion in favor of Azerbaijan over the issues of not only Nagorno-Karabakh, but also presented the case of Nakhichevan, an Azerbaijani enclave separated by Armenia. They also sought Pakistan's help to build up Azerbaijan's armed forces. "We do not possess nuclear weapons," stated Ali, "but we are rich in natural resources, including oil, natural gas, and trained technical personnel. An excellent

institute of technology specializing in oil extraction is maintained at Baku which attracts students from 54 countries. We are prepared to help and to receive help from advanced Islamic states."³⁷ Pakistan recognized Azerbaijan on 11 December at the OIC meeting and on 20 December extended diplomatic recognition to all Central Asian states.

In December 1991, Pakistan sent a 26 man delegation to the Central Asian republics to lay the foundations for cooperative relations. The delegation was led by Sardar Asaf Ali, the Minister of State for Economic Affairs. With each Central Asian republic except Uzbekistan, the Minister of State signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish economic and cultural relations. Each republic was offered "a long-term revolving credit for the import of light engineering products of Pakistan;" Uzbekistan received a revolving credit line of \$30 million. Moreover, Pakistan announced it would in the very near future establish for the Pakistan International Airlines a direct Islamabad-Tashkent route, the first step in starting the air routes with other Central Asian republics.

The Pakistani delegation also established a working group with Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan to explore the possibility of linking these republics' highways with Pakistan through Xinjiang to the Karakorum Highway and eventually to Karachi. This connection would provide an outlet to the sea to these landlocked republics. However, some proposed projects cannot be implemented until normal relations are returned to Afghanistan. Pakistan promised to link Uzbekistan and Tajikistan with Karachi through Afghanistan and Peshawar. With Tajikistan, Pakistan explored the possibility of importing electricity through the Wakhan Corridor especially for use in Pakistan's northern areas. Pakistan also offered to purchase Turkmen natural gas and pipe it to Pakistan via Afghanistan.

Of all the visitors to Central Asia from Pakistan, its entrepreneurs and businessman have had the most impact on the Central Asian leaders, especially in Kazakhstan. On 9 December, Kazakh Prime Minister Sergei Tereshchenko asked visiting Pakistani businessmen to raise \$200 million on the international money market. Without this amount, Tereshchenko reasoned Kazakhstan risked bankruptcy. Using his telephones and FAX machines, Pakistani business raised \$100 million in three days! Pakistani businessmen on their own

concluded several agreements in the Central Asian republics: 1) a Pakistani hotel chain signed letters of intent to build five-star hotels in four capitals; 2) a group signed a protocol to train Central Asian officials in business management and the English language; 3) four Pakistani banks agreed to open branches in the Central Asian capitals; 4) the Pakistani company Istaphone agreed to establish an international cellular telephone network in three republics; and 5) the Tabhani Corporation, which had traded for 20 years with the former Soviet Union, signed a \$200 million contract with Uzbekistan for consumer goods and agreed to establish a new airline called Asia Air in collaboration with the Government of Uzbekistan.

Pakistani industrialists have been less bold in committing their capital to the textile industry in Uzbekistan. While the principal of profit-sharing and its repatriation is accepted, the Central Asians have not yet worked out a pricing system. Also, political instability and the absence of financial guarantees have so far discouraged industrialists from investing their resources in Central Asia. Banking facilities, insurance, management training, and tourism are badly needed in Central Asia. In these areas, Pakistan can be helpful. However, in order to encourage foreign investment, these republics have to decide how best to price electricity, water, and raw materials for jointly operated industrial enterprises; determine the labor costs; and facilitate repatriation of profits in hard currency. The technical problems are very complex and need time to resolve.³⁸

Despite Pakistan's preoccupation with its internal political dynamics during 1989-1991, and the Nawaz Sharif governments' initially tepid approach to Central Asia, it finally sprung into action once Pakistani public opinion responded to the war. Wisely, Pakistan's first initiatives have remained in the realm of economics and culture, while some military assistance program with Azerbaijan might be in the offing. The opening of Central Asia presents Pakistan with a new security environment, especially when the mujahidin return to Afghanistan and establish a friendly Islamic-nationalist government in Kabul. Finally, Pakistan would be freed from the nutcracker squeeze, which the former Soviet Union had created through an "alliance" between Afghanistan and India. With the cooperation of a friendly Afghanistan, Pakistan's

diplomacy would have the opportunity to take initiatives for building what the Pakistan Central Asia Friendship Society has called a Commonwealth of Central and Southwest Asian Islamic states.

What are its prospects, especially in light of this analysis?

Some Tentative Concluding Comments

Three circles of regional planning have begun to emerge: (1) Turkey-Iran-Pakistan; (2) the six Central Asian republics; and (3) the Volga-Ural-Caucasian region. Some developments within these regions are conducive to regional interaction, and some certainly militate against this process.

Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan. Motivated by geographic imperatives, perceptions of security, economic opportunity, and a sense of future prospects, Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan have moved fairly rapidly to establish cooperative relations with the Central Asian republics. The three neighboring states have the experience of regional economic and military cooperation during the last 40 years and can extend this know-how to the Central Asian states, including Xinjiang. Pakistan counts on her traditional strategic cooperation with China and in dealing with Xinjiang does not question Chinese sovereignty over this Turkic-Islamic region. It remains to be seen whether or not Beijing would want to let Xinjiang be extensively involved in the vortex of Central and Southwest Asian politics and run the risk of confronting nationalists' demands for self-determination in Xinjiang.

Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan's movements in Central Asia have been unilateral. No evidence has surfaced, indicating any coordination between these three states. On the contrary, much greater coordination between the United States and Turkey seems to be developing to counter expanding Iranian influence in the Central Asian republics. The US seems to be determined to project Turkey as the role model, a secular Muslim state integrated into the community of Western states. Comparatively speaking, Turkey and Iran have the advantages of geographic contiguity and ethnic affinity with Central Asia over Pakistan. This situation would diminish to some degree when normalcy is restored to war-torn

Afghanistan. Through Afghanistan, with its fraternal cooperation, and Xinjiang, Pakistan should be able to establish close relations with Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. These states are geographically within a manageable distance and the Karakorum Highway linking Pakistan to Xinjiang can be connected to the roads with Gorno-Badakhshan in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Similarly, Afghanistan and Pakistan, through the pooling of national resources, can build extensions of Afghanistan's ringroad to link with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. However, the shortest route between Pakistan and Tajikistan will be a link road of approximately 11 miles, which may be constructed through the Wakhan Corridor from the region of Yasin in Chitral. Physically and financially, these projects are feasible.

Pakistan, for the foreseeable future, will be well-advised to concentrate on its relations with Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, and avoid getting involved in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The Caucasian area would remain beyond Pakistan's reach, while cultural and economic relations can be established at a rather comfortable level. The problems of the Caucasian states are very likely to involve Turkey and Iran, and they are already fostering relations not only with Azerbaijan, but also with the autonomous republics of Nakhichevan and Adjaristan (Adzhar Assr).

Azerbaijan has a split personality. Ethnically and linguistically, most closely related to the Republic of Turkey, Azerbaijan (being 60 percent Shia) is denominationally related to its cousin, the Iranian Azerbaijan. Within Iran, Azerbaijan has remained very often self-assertive of its ethnic personality, which has at times verged on secession. Tajikistan, though widely separated from Iran by Turkmen and Uzbek territories, is an extension of Iranian culture. Recently, the Azerbaijan Republic decided to adopt Roman script, like Turkey, while Tajikistan has decided to reintroduce the Persian-Arabic script and gradually drop Cyrillic, which it was forced to adopt in 1940. In January 1992, Iran signed a cultural agreement with Tajikistan under which Iran will publish thousands of academic text books using Persian script. These texts would also introduce Islamic concepts and vignettes from Islamic history.

Several Iranian poets recently organized a series of cultural evenings in Tajikistan to honor the noted

Persian poets Ferdowsi, Rudeki, and Hafiz. According to the Iranian press, such events are also being requested in Uzbekistan, where the philosopher and physician Avicenna was born. Iran also plans to provide linguistic assistance to Afghanistan.³⁹ In other words, both Iran and Turkey are likely to be engaged in the struggle to extend their cultural and linguistic influence in Central Asia, and there is a danger that it may spawn a low grade cold war, unless the two states coordinate their policies bilaterally or within the framework of ECO in order not to leave out Pakistan.

Moreover, Saudi Arabia has also propagated its cultural influence through Islam, but its might will be felt through the petrodollars which are likely to be made available by the Mecca-based Islamic Development Bank. If, however, Shia-Sunni conflict gets extended into Central Asia by Saudi-Iran struggles, it would prove to be most counterproductive for all Islamic states. Already, Turkish secularism is being projected as an alternative to Iran's Shia fundamentalism and Saudi Arabia's "Wahhabi" Islam. After the death of Marxism, Islam is perceived to be the last surviving example of a totalitarian ideology "that claims universal relevance." This makes Islam, in the West's perception, "an uncomfortable neighbor" in the community of nations.⁴⁰

Counting on the support of its Western allies, Turkey is carving out a distinctively national Turkish foreign policy in regard to the Central Asian states. Turkey has advised them to stay secular and switch to the Latin script. Turkey is attempting to revitalize the Black Sea Economic Union to include both the Balkans and the Turkic Republics. In order to strengthen secularism in Central Asia, on 30 January 1992, the 38-state Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) admitted to full membership the European and Asian successor states of the former Soviet Union.⁴¹ Turkey also played a catalytic role in this development. To Iran, this was West's determined attempt to "lure Central Asian republics from Islamic roots."⁴² Watching these developments from the sideline, Pakistan announced in January 1992 that it would open embassies in the Central Asian republics within two weeks.

While cooperating with each other within the framework of ECO, Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan are interacting with the Central Asian republics

independently, and even in contradiction of each others' policies.

The Six Central Asian Republics. Within the circle of Central Asia, there is recognition of the need to create a mini-commonwealth of states which finds its justification in geography, religion, common culture, language, and history. However, historical Russian domination and Soviet oppression have left a deep imprint on the personality of the Central Asians, their political systems, and their economies. The demographic composition in each republic has become heterogenous. Russian and other European nationalities constitute from 10 to 22 of the population of the five republics, and in Kazakhstan the indigenous Kazakh population is no more than 40 percent of the total population. During 1990-91, a large number of these exogenous nationalities have left the Central Asian republics in droves; nevertheless, Kazakhstan still remains a binational Eurasian state. In any future election, these European nationals would exercise substantial influence on the outcome, and state policy would consequently be considerably oriented toward Moscow. Precisely for this reason Kazakh President Nazarbaev views himself a bridge between East and West.

In each Central Asian republic, Islamic resurgence is noticeable. New mosques are being built, and religious schools for children are multiplying. Islam-oriented political parties have appeared, even though they are supposed to be illegal, since the constitutions of every republic bans religious-based political parties. Islam-based political parties are particularly active in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Moreover, national languages have been made official along with Russian. Russian names for towns and cities have been replaced by their native names. Formerly called Frunze, the capitol of Kyrgyzstan has the new Kyrgyz name of Bishkek.

The most populous of the Central Asian states, Uzbekistan was the heart of Turkistan, which the Bolsheviks sliced up into several republics. Also, in Uzbekistan, the history of the imperial tradition is exceptionally strong. Here, the Timurid Empire flourished, and from its Fergana Valley hailed Emperor Zahir-ud-Din Babur, who founded the Mughal Empire in India in 1526.

In Uzbekistan, longing for the vast Central Asian

state, a revival of the old idea of grand Turkistan has come alive partly inspired by Islam. Despite the pull of Islam, dreadful inter-ethnic riots between the Uzbeks and Kyrgyz and Uzbek and Maskitian Turks took place in 1990-91. Clearly, Islamic solidarity has not overcome the narrow but deep ethnic cleavages. Ethnic identity would remain a major obstacle to any national movement seeking to unify the Central Asian states.

The Volga-Ural-Caucasian Region. Ethnic cleavage not only divides Central Asia but is also a formidable barrier in the Volga-Ural region and its improbable unification with the Caucasian autonomous republics. Here the old imperial policy of divide and rule continues to apply with full force. Russia will attempt to justify it in the name of the unity of the Russian Federation. The fact that Russia conquered Tatar territories and the ancestral lands of other Turkic nationalities in the Volga-Ural region is now a "forgotten" story, except for the Tatar Muslim nationalists, who would want to unify the autonomous republics of this region with that of

Caucasia and perhaps with Azerbaijan. Despite Tatar aspirations, no substantial groundwork for independence and secession from the Russian Federation exists. But, who really can predict what might take place during the next three to five years.

Azerbaijan's conflicts with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh and the eventual settlement of the Nakhichevan are likely to linger for many years, like the Arab-Israeli conflict or India-Pakistan dispute over Kashmir. Azerbaijan is not likely to surrender Nagorno-Karabakh territory to Armenia, despite the Armenian majority in the enclave.

Since the 1989 census, major population shifts have occurred in Nagorno-Karabakh, Nakhichevan, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. It is generally believed that hardly any Armenian population has remained in Nakhichevan, while the Armenian population in Karabakh has dwindled very substantially. Since Azerbaijan has imposed intermittently, a blockade of Karabakh reducing supply of fuel and food, a large number of Armenians have fled to Armenia.

To Azerbaijan, both enclaves historically belong to Azerbaijan. The Azaris contend that in the past

Table 3: Changes in Ethnic Composition				
Ethnic Composition of the Nagorno-Karabakh				
	1979	1989	Growth Percent	1989 Percentage of Total
Total	162,181	189,029	16.6	
Armenians	123,076	145,450	18.2	76.9
Azeri	37,264	40,632	10.9	21.5
Russians	1,265	1,922	51.9	1.0
Ukrainians	140	416	197.1	
Belarusians	37	79	113.5	
All Slavs	1,442	2,417	67.6	1.3
Ethnic Composition of Nakhichevan				
Total	240,459	293,875	22.2	
Azeri	229,968	281,807	22.5	95.5
Armenians	3,406	1,858	-45.4	0.6
Kurds	1,696	3,127	84.4	1.1
Russians	3,807	3,782	-0.7	1.1
Ukrainians	924	1,906	102.3	0.2
Belarusians	94	450	378.7	0.2
All Slavs	4,843	6,138	26.7	2.1

Sources: Published by the State Committee on Statistics, *Natsional'ny Sostav Nasdeniia, Chasti II, Informatsionno-izdatel'ski Tsent* (Moscow: 1989); Paul B. Henze, "The Demography of the Census, According to 1989 Soviet Census Data," *Central Asian Survey* 10, No. 2, 154-155.

when Armenians were pushed out of Iranian and Turkish territories, they came to settle in Nagorno-Karabakh. This long sojourn does not entitle them to claim ownership. Armenian authorities supported the claims of Karabakh to unification with the Armenian Republic on 20 February 1990 and called the Soviet decision of 5 July 1921 placing Karabakh in Azerbaijan, null and void.⁴²

In a speech in December 1991, US Secretary of State James Baker criticized Azerbaijan for its "aggressive policy," meaning its actions in Nagorno-Karabakh. While Armenia was recognized as an independent state, Azerbaijan was not, because of its "record on human rights." Evidently, this sensitivity has now been set aside in favor of a new policy which led Baker to Azerbaijan in February 1992 to establish diplomatic relations. The objective is to prevent the growth of trade, aid, and cultural relations between the Central Asian states and Iran. This new US policy might start off another mini cold war, which is unnecessary. At the present time, there is no threat to US interests emanating from any pan-Islamic or pan-Turkic movement.

Finally, there is no good reason for the United States not to be able to cooperate with resurgent Islam in Central Asia. Relations between Iran and the United States are not destined to be antagonistic for an indefinite future. In Central Asia, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan are likely to play a natural political role which will be determined by geography, history, economy, religion, and culture. This process does not necessarily militate against United States national interests. In fact, the congruence of mutually complementing interests are in the offing.

Endnotes

1. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, *Address to the National Defense College*, (Rawalpindi: 16 June 1991, personal copy), 11.
2. Ahmad Rashid, "All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go," *The Herald* (Karachi: November 1991), 75.
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Post-USSR Foreign Relations: Impact on Central and Southwest Asia

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Involuntary Independence

The presidents of Central Asia's republics have unexpectedly become the heads of independent countries. A year ago, none of these men would have predicted this outcome. The speed with which the Soviet government and communist party collapsed came as an unpleasant surprise to the leaders of this region, who had been hoping for a continuation of subsidies from Moscow and counting on supplies of energy and foodstuffs at below-world market prices for at least the next few years.

Central Asia's leaders were the most stalwart supporters of the perpetuation of the Soviet Union. In the March 1991 referendum, their populations turned out *en masse* to vote for the continuation of the USSR. Moreover, these men demanded the fewest concessions to republic sovereignty of all the Soviet leaders.

While Central Asia's leaders seem to have had contradictory attitudes towards the coup¹ even to the dissolution of the Communist Party,² until the *de facto* dissolution of the USSR on 21 December 1991, all were willing to share control of their republic's natural resources with a smaller and more benevolent Soviet central authority structure. This was true even of Uzbekistan's leaders who, though demanding full independence, were willing to accept a form of statehood more symbolic than real.³

Up until the very last minute, Central Asia's leaders maintained hope that the union could be saved. President Nursultan Nazarbaev of Kazakhstan, whose plea for a redefined union was endorsed by the emergency session of the Supreme Soviet which met in the aftermath of the coup, also

spearheaded the effort to get a new Union Treaty drafted and ratified, hosting the USSR republic leaders in Alma Ata in October 1991.⁴ Moreover, all but Uzbekistan endorsed the draft Treaty, and all five Central Asian states supported the USSR's new republic-based joint economic program.⁵ However, the decision of the Slavic "Big Three" to form a Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in Minsk on 8 December 1991 effectively ended the existence of the nation the Central Asian leaders sought to preserve. Their immediate response was to join Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in condemning Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine's decision.⁶

But on 12 December 1991, the five Central Asian leaders met together in Turkmenistan's capital of Ashkhabad and reversed their stance, expressing willingness to join the new Commonwealth if they could do so as equals of the founding members.⁷ This request was basically met, although the Minsk declaration was allowed to stand as well. The leaders of 12 Soviet republics met in Kazakhstan's capital city on 21 December 1991 to sign the Alma Ata Declaration expanding commonwealth membership to include all but the three Baltic republics.⁸

The creation of the CIS in the USSR's stead has given Central Asia's leaders the responsibility for keeping their nations afloat economically themselves, with little assurance of predictable long-term outside assistance, be it from Russia, other former Soviet republics, or interested foreign states. Moreover, the magnitude of the task has left several of Central Asia's leaders of the region eager for the CIS ties to be strengthened, even at the expense of republic sovereignty.

The challenges before the leaders of these new states are enormous. All five republics face serious economic problems, most of which are the result of the collapse of the USSR's regionally interdependent economy. In Central Asia's case, the

collapse meant the abrupt end of subsidies from Moscow. Cash subsidies had been intended as compensation for the cotton monoculture and raw material, mineral extraction-based economy of the region, as well as direct grants-in-aid to mothers and children. The two combined allowed these republics to provide a minimum standard of living for a fast-growing and largely rural-based population.⁹

Now this population must feed itself, either through agriculture or by producing the trade surplus necessary to buy food. Central Asia's leaders have also to cope with millions of unemployed and unskilled rural youth.¹⁰ Moreover, the collapse of the union has encouraged hundreds of thousands of technologically-skilled Russians to leave the area.¹¹

Possibly the biggest economic problem is 50 years of Soviet economic planning have left Central Asia with an acute water shortage and general ecological crisis.¹² Its environment is so contaminated that in places like the Aral Sea region on the Semipalatinsk test site, more than a quarter of the population suffers from environmentally induced or exacerbated health problems.¹³

Though Central Asia's leaders repeatedly underscore the potential wealth of the region (oil, natural gas, gold, platinum, uranium, copper, and coal), economic autonomy came suddenly. These men and their advisers have very limited direct experience with international relations, but they must now devise foreign policies for their republics.

Until this fall, none of Central Asia's presidents, not even those who previously had worked in the ministerial side of their republic's government, ever had responsibility for managing a republic's economy in full. USSR ministries and their Moscow-appointed local representatives always controlled all of the nation's key industries or natural resources, no matter what republic they were found in. Republic ministries assumed full or partial responsibility only for those parts of their economy that were both non-strategic and locally or regionally focused.

Now, Central Asia's leaders are fully in charge of planning and executing complex economic reforms and for deciding what type of foreign investment to seek and how best to secure it. Moreover, these men generally have even less experience in international relations than they have in managing their republic economics in their entirety.

Here however, the republic leaders have had a short training period, from June 1990 through December 1991. After Boris Yeltsin declared Russia's sovereignty, Mikhail Gorbachev encouraged all republic leaders to declare theirs. As a result, although foreign trade relations still had to go through Moscow before ratification, republic leaders were able to cultivate republic-foreign state contacts.

The Central Asian leaders recognize that the stakes are high, and that with bureaucrats from Moscow no longer around to serve as scapegoats, they will be the focus of anger by an indignant public. Moreover, they know if they fail to discharge these responsibilities to the satisfaction of their populations, not only will the current regimes fall, but violent inter-ethnic conflicts are likely to be sparked as well. With the stakes so high, and the preparation for independence so inadequate, it is not surprising that the leaders of these various republics are in a state of shock and even disarray.

Regional Cooperation

All Central Asia's leaders are pinning their hopes for long-term political survival on outside assistance, and for now at least, they are fairly indiscriminate about from whom they will accept it. Everyone recognizes that, at least in part, this assistance should take the form of increased regional cooperation. Not only do the Central Asians share a common history, religion, and culture, they also share water-resources and an energy grid. Their individual economies are still fully interlinked.

However, the Central Asians have never worked well together. Stalin drew the map of Soviet Central Asia with an eye to reducing the prospects for regional unity. Five separate republics were formed, creating national units for ethnic communities that had yet to think of themselves as distinct nationalities. Moreover, boundaries were set to insure the presence of large irredentist populations in each republic. Potentially the most contentious dispute is between the Uzbeks and the Tajiks. Central Asia's two main Persian-speaking cities, Samarkand and Bukhara were included in Uzbekistan, leaving the Tajiks with the backwater town of Dushambe as their republic capital.

For their part, the Uzbeks have periodically staked a claim to all of the Fergana Valley, which includes

Kyrgyzstan's Osh Oblast, and part of Khojent (formerly Leninabad) Oblast in Tajikistan. They also argue that parts of southern Kazakhstan and eastern Turkmenistan (formerly of the pre-revolutionary Turkestan region) are rightfully theirs as well.

The republics of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan disagree both on where their border is and where it should be, and they briefly came to blows over this question in summer 1989. However, for the moment at least, the current boundaries are accepted by all of Central Asia's leaders as a *fait accompli*.

Given the underlying tensions and long-standing rivalries between the various republics, Central Asia's leaders harbor no dreams of a single unified Central Asian state emerging in their lifetimes. All do recognize that when possible, they should try and work in concert, particularly to address problems common to them all.

This is the purpose of their loose regional council formed in June 1990 at the joint initiative of Islam Karimov and Nursultan Nazarbaev.¹⁴ The council remained largely a paper initiative for the first year of its existence. However, when the region's leaders gathered in Tashkent on 15 August 1991 for their second annual meeting, they announced plans to expand its functions. At the same time, membership was expanded to include Azerbaijan.¹⁵

The August coup occurred before any plans could be implemented, and in its aftermath, Central Asia's leaders had to concentrate on the task of dissolving their communist parties and trying to patch up the increasingly more fragile economic and political ties holding the whole country together.

Moreover, in the months between the coup and the collapse of the USSR, it became obvious that the basic interests of several of Central Asia's republics were divergent. Possibly because of economic acumen, or because their republics had large Russian populations, Nazarbaev of Kazakhstan and Askar Akaev of Kyrgyzstan both became strong advocates of retaining a union.¹⁶

Islam Karimov, President of Uzbekistan, became a more forceful advocate of the need for his republic's immediate political independence, although he accepted the need for a more lengthy period of economic transition. In the aftermath of the coup, Tajikistan had an anti-party coup followed by a pro-party counter coup, and former communist party boss Rahmon Nabiev accepted the need for

complete republic autonomy as a precondition for both winning the presidential election and for governing his republic.¹⁷ At the same time, Turkmenistan's Saparmurad Niazov quietly put forward his oil-rich republic's claims to independence.¹⁸

Thus, though the five republics met as a group in Ashkhabad, and all chose to enter the CIS, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan had already made up their mind to do so without first consulting the others. In fact, at the Ashkhabad meeting in December, Central Asian leaders debated and rejected the idea of forming their own Central Asian Community or Turkestan Confederation.¹⁹

Nonetheless, the five Central Asian states want to preserve some form of regional community and have each pledged financial support for completion of the track across Turkmenistan necessary to complete the rail link from China to Iran. This is the first all-Central Asian post-Soviet Union economic project.

For the moment, this community seems content with largely symbolic acts, such as the gathering of Central Asian parliamentarians held in February 1991 in advance of an all-CIS gathering.²⁰ Furthermore, there is strong reason to presume that for the immediate future at least, regional initiatives are likely to become even more symbolic than real, as Central Asia's newly independent states place the interests of statehood over cooperation.

There are signs of this already. Though both Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have at least for the moment accepted the need to keep the Red Army under a united command, Uzbekistan is not allowing troops in Turkmenistan access to military repair facilities on the former's territory.²¹ President Niazov of Turkmenistan now talks of ties with Uzbekistan as a question of "foreign relations."²² Similarly, Turkmenistan has begun charging Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan hard currency for oil and gas deliveries; although Niazov has agreed to receive a Tajik delegation whose purpose is to receive "friendly" relief in the form of ruble payments.²³

In fact, it is the issue of currency more than any other that is driving the Central Asian republics apart. The currency issue is tied to the more central issue of relations with Russia and how to define the nature of the CIS bond more generally.

President Boris Yeltsin and most of his chief

advisers have been quite emphatic about the preconditions for free trade with Russia. To earn this right, republics must join the ruble economic zone and be willing to fully coordinate trade and banking policies with the Russian government.²⁴ There is also strong pressure on these republics to support Russia's call for a united military command and integrated multi-national force, although that is not explicitly linked to Russia's economic demands.

The economic conditions Russia sets forth are part of Moscow's effort to ensure economic dominance of the new commonwealth and are designed to transform the ill-defined community into a loose confederation. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan by and large accept this formulation as in their own national best interests, although they are certainly loathe to express this publicly. The other republics reject Russia's goal outright.

All five Central Asian republics are currently in the ruble zone, although the ruble itself is in short supply everywhere. However, only Kazakhstan has tried to fully coordinate its economic plan with Russia, a republic with which it shares a border that stretches across two time zones.

Kyrgyzstan is pursuing an independent but allied economic strategy, and like Kazakhstan is still able to trade with Russia using rubles. The rest of the republics are trading with Russia, still everyone's major trade partner, partly in barter and partly in hard currency credits, naturally increasing the pressure for them to deal with each other in the same fashion.

Despite Russia's economic "strong-arming" of the other republics, the ruble-zone is collapsing, as are inter-regional linkages and individual republic economies themselves. Moreover, the Central Asian republics have distinctly different views of these developments, depending upon how closely they believe their long-term national survival is linked to that of the CIS.

Kazakhstan's Goals

The one thing that bonds all of Kazakhstan's politicians is a fear of what full independence would mean for their republic. Kazakhstan is almost evenly split between Kazakhs and Russians, with Kazakhs slightly outnumbering Russians, but Russians and Ukrainians combined outnumber Kazakhs. Kazakhstan is the only republic of the former USSR

in which the people who the republic are named after are a minority population. By their own estimates, the Kazakhs are just over 40 percent of the population.²⁵

The government of Kazakhstan is dominated by Kazakhs, as it has been for most of the post-World War II period. However, most of the republic's industrial potential is located in Russian-dominated areas in the northern part of the republic, some oil deposits and phosphorous excepted. The industries in these areas used to be run directly by Moscow. The Russians who lived in these regions answered to Kazakhstan's government but were of course citizens of the USSR, and their rights and privileges were identical to Russians of the Russian republic just over the border.

The Russians of northern Kazakhstan generally lived better than their Siberian neighbors, so they did not mind the Kazakh overlords, who in any event were relatively peripheral to their everyday lives. For their part, most Kazakhs, the majority of whom live in the southern part of the republic, were not too disturbed over the fact that they generally lived worse than the Russians. They hope this will improve now that they are "independent," but they also measure their relative security against the lifestyles of the Uzbeks who live immediately to the south. In the Soviet period, and still today, the Kazakhs generally live better than their Uzbek neighbors.

Nazarbaev's goal is to preserve these balances. As a result, he has been a vociferous advocate of privatization to keep pace with developments in Russia and to encourage foreign investment in his republic. Nazarbaev understands his republic will not survive if the Russians make a serious secession bid, for most of them live in ethnically compact areas in the north in which they are the majority population. Nazarbaev only has to pick up the Russian "patriotic" press from Moscow to be reminded of the pressure to "readjust" his republic's borders.²⁶

Nazarbaev hopes his program will give Russians an economic stake in the survival of Kazakhstan, as Russians are expected to benefit most from the privatization of the service sector, the privatization of housing, and the auctioning off of state industrial enterprises. Agricultural land is only to be partly privatized; state and collective farms will be transferred to private use over a 10-15 year period.²⁷

Nazarbaev had initially hoped to use the vast Tengiz oil field to fund basic social services and the development of a technically-competent Kazakh cadre. But plans to develop this field, initially announced by the USSR and Chevron, have yet to be formalized.²⁸

The difficulties surrounding the Tengiz project point out the political and economic inexperience of the Kazakhs. Though the Kazakhs were brought in late in the deal after the principal terms were already worked out between Chevron and Gorbachev's representatives in the USSR Ministries of Oil and Foreign Economic Relations, close to two years went into the original negotiations. Initially Nazarbaev did not find fault with the deal, but after a Moscow press leak, it became a political hot potato within his republic.²⁹ Moscow critics and his party foes both claimed the Kazakhs had been "had." Chevron and Kazakhstan then went back to fully negotiate the terms of the agreement, with Chevron being offered a smaller piece of the field than previously.

While this was going on during the summer and autumn of 1991, the USSR ceased to exist. The group of Russian advisors who came from Moscow to Alma Ata to help the now newly independent Kazakhstan with their economic plans brought with them a series of economic reports that underscored the ecological hazards associated with the project.

Though a final decision has yet to be made, it appears that for the moment, Kazakhstan's government will content itself with Elf of France's development of oil in Aktubinsk (a largely Russian area) rather than the Tengiz field in Mangystau (a largely Kazakh area).³⁰ Whatever Kazakhstan's motivation, the history of the affair is not likely to leave Chevron and American executives who have heard Chevron negotiators' tales of woe eager to make major investments in the republic.

Nonetheless, of all Central Asian republic leaders, Nazarbaev has been most reluctant to press his advantage as the leader of an Islamic people. Nazarbaev has always been cautious in his handling of Islam. He would like to reap the potential foreign policy benefits of the Kazakhs as an Islamic people, if this can be done without risking the domestic security of the republic in general or his own brand of secular rule in particular.

For the first time in its modern history, Kazakhstan can capitalize on being a Muslim country, and its

representatives participated as observers in recent international Islamic meetings held in Dakkar and Tehran. Kazakhstan's government has encouraged overtures made by both Iranians and Saudi Arabians to help develop transportation links and a banking system, respectively.³¹

Kazakhstan has pursued ties with Turkey more vigorously than those with any other Muslim state. Although it has no direct border with Kazakhstan, Turkey has been most aggressive about marketing itself in this republic as elsewhere in Central Asia. In March 1991, Turkey's President Turgut Ozal made a state visit to Kazakhstan (as well as to Azerbaijan), and signed some preliminary agreements concerning economic, cultural, and scientific cooperation.³² In the fall of 1991, Ozal hosted a return state visit by Kazakhstan's president. During Nazarbaev's visit to Ankara, a number of bilateral memoranda of intent on economic and scientific cooperation between Turkey and Kazakhstan were signed.³³

Russian advisors close to Nazarbaev privately admit dismay over the possibility of Kazakhstan using Turkey as a model. Their preference is for Nazarbaev to embrace a fully secular model of a multi-national state. Thus, they must have been disturbed by a January interview Nazarbaev gave to the Austrian press in which he admitted that Kazakhstan as "a bridge between Europe and Asia" might be willing to join some sort of "community" of Turkic states.³⁴

However, Nazarbaev is committed to building a secular state and has been trying to balance the interest of Muslim neighbors with foreign investment by non-Muslim states. For the immediate future at least, Kazakhstan's major foreign economic partner will be China, and Nazarbaev's trip to Urumqi and Beijing received a great deal of publicity in his republic. The opening of direct rail links between China and Kazakhstan puts these republics closer to Chinese factories and raw materials.³⁵ There are also plans to increase air links between the two republics as well, since both are determined to increase the volume of foreign trade.³⁶

Though not on the same scale, ties with Korea are certain to grow as well. Korea has already become a major source of high technology investment in Kazakhstan, where Chan Young Bang, a Korean-American with close ties to Korea's major

industrial families, is vice-chairman of the Council of Economic Experts. There are also growing ties between Kazakhstan and Singapore, and Singapore's former Prime Minister Li Kwan Yew has been a source of economic advice for Nazarbaev.³⁷

For now, its ties with Russia are the ones most critical to Kazakhstan. When a terms of trade dispute closed the borders between the two republics for the month following the signing of the Alma Ata accord, Kazakhstan's economy ground to a halt. Kazakhstan then entered into a new economic agreement with Russia, largely ceding to the latter's terms.³⁸ The economic links between the two republics are certainly further strengthened by Kazakhstan's precarious ethnic balance, and Nazarbaev is unlikely to pursue a foreign policy strategy which is out of touch with Russia's own.

Kyrgyzstan's Goals

Though Kyrgyzstan shares no border with Russia, its economy is closely intertwined with Russia's. Moreover, like Kazakhstan, the republic has a large Russian population. Kyrgyz are a bare majority in their republic, and nearly a third of the population of the republic are Europeans.

However, while Kazakhstan is a giant republic (over a million square miles), Kyrgyzstan is small (just over 76,000 miles), and its population of 4.2 million people is one fourth that of Kazakhstan. Moreover, it does not have oil or any other strategic resource to attract immediate massive foreign investment. Nonetheless, the Kyrgyz have a strong sense of national identity;³⁹ if anything, it is stronger than either their Kazakh or Uzbek neighbors. They do not want to be absorbed by either nation or Russia to the north.

However, the Kyrgyz were already aware of the fragility of their economy before the collapse of the USSR. The republic began 1992 with a 25 percent budget deficit,⁴⁰ and the situation quickly worsened when oil and coal deliveries from Russia and Kazakhstan were put on a hard currency only basis.

Thus Kyrgyzstan's short run economic plans have focussed on working out bilateral trade agreements with each of the various former Soviet republics.⁴¹ Their long term hopes rest with the "rationalization" of Kyrgyzstan's economy through privatization and the attraction of long term investment in mineral

extraction and the development of light industry. Without this investment, the republic's economy will not be revived. As is true in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan's agricultural land will be transferred to private usage on inheritable long term leases, but it cannot be privately owned.

More than any other leader, Askar Akaev understands the linkage between political and economic reform, and he has tried to distinguish his republic from the neighboring ones by introducing a program of democratic reforms far more extensive than those of his neighbors. Moreover, he has taken great pains to familiarize himself with Western political thinking, and because of this made a strong impression on both Bush and Baker during his fall 1991 trip to Washington.⁴² This impression was further strengthened during Baker's December 1991 fact finding trip to Bishkek, the republic's capital, and Kyrgyzstan was included on the list of republics slated for immediate and full US diplomatic recognition. The US embassy opened in Bishkek in February 1992.⁴³

Akaev, however, is interested in developing close ties with all Western democracies, as well as with his Asian neighbors. Just like in Kazakhstan, Korean investment is being encouraged,⁴⁴ and a concerted effort to expand trade with China is being made by leaders on both sides of the border.

Akaev, like Nazarbaev, is reluctant to advance his nation's cause in the pursuit of an explicitly Islamic foreign policy. Nonetheless, he has been pleased to receive high level Iranian delegations to his republic with their promises of assistance.⁴⁵ However, although Kyrgyzstan has been willing to take aid from all givers, Akaev is more interested in expanding ties to Turkey than to Iran.⁴⁶

Tajikistan's Goals

Tajikistan, with a population of just over five million people, is the most economically disadvantaged of all Soviet republics. The republic is generally mineral-poor (with its low grade uranium more useful as an international bargaining chip than in nuclear technology), over-populated, and short of arable land. The Tajiks' major asset may prove to be their Persian origin, for Iran adds a moral obligation to its strategic incentive in this republic.

Iran has shown more interest in Tajikistan than any other foreign power, and their embassy was first to

open in Tehran in January 1992, when the Iranian consulate became an embassy. During Iranian foreign minister Ali Akbar Velayati's month long trip to the USSR in November, he visited Iran's then newly opened consulate in Tajikistan and formalized plans for the opening of a branch of National Bank of the Islamic Republics. He also worked out the details of planned direct airlinks, telephone, and television service.⁴⁷

Nabiev honored the Tajiks by making his February 1992 trip to Tehran his first foreign visit, in part to attend the Economic Cooperation Organization meeting which convened on February 16.⁴⁸ Tajikistan is one of three Soviet republics to join Pakistan, Tehran, and Turkey in this organization, and Nabiev is also actively pursuing Turkish and Pakistani promises of economic development assistance. However, given Tajikistan's traditional fears of Turkish encroachment, all things being equal, the Nabiev government sees the Pakistanis as more attractive partners. They have also received some economic aid from a group of Arab sheikhs who arranged for grain credits with Canada.⁴⁹

Tajikistan's government is also eager to trade with Western partners. An effort was made by the Nabiev government to impress Secretary of State Baker during his February visit, and like his fellow Central Asian former party bosses, Nabiev endorsed a full array of democratic principles as a basis of strengthened ties between the two countries. The Nabiev government is also reported to be working with a Philadelphia law firm and a London-based foreign trade development corporation in order to improve its image and attract Western investment.

Turkmenistan's Goals

Turkmenistan is similar to Tajikistan in many ways. It is the same size and has almost the same number of inhabitants. It also has an acute shortage of arable land. However, unlike Tajikistan, it has vast unexploited reserves of oil and natural gas. Thus, unlike the other republics of the region, Turkmenistan is in a position to sell off natural resources in order to pay for the goods and services Russia has denied them.

Moreover, though Turkmenistan's political leadership never actively sought independence for their republic, they are not frightened to accept it, knowing that though forcibly kicked out of

Moscow's economic orbit, the oil-rich sands of their republic provide them with the chance of a safe landing. Thus, foreign development of the republic's mineral wealth is the primary concern of Turkmenistan's President Saparmurad Niazov, for he hopes to use his republic's natural wealth to purchase the necessary technical and humanitarian assistance. To this end, he seems willing to offer generous terms to potential foreign partners.

Turkmenistan is of even greater interest to Iran than is Tajikistan. These two nations share a common border, and there is a Turkmen irredentist population in Iran. Consequently, Iran is one of the nations vying actively for position in Turkmenistan.

During the same November trip to the USSR, Velayati made similar promises in Turkmenistan, and Iran also pledged to complete construction of the railroad line between Turkmenistan and Meshed. The completion of this rail system will provide direct rail service from Urumchi in western China across all of Central Asia, through Iran and on to Istanbul.⁵⁰

Iran has offered Turkmenistan assistance in developing its oil industry and to both purchase and help develop Turkmenistan's natural gas.⁵¹ Iran needs Turkmen gas in order to supply its southern provinces. But the deal became more attractive to Turkmenistan in February 1992, when the old USSR (now Russian) Ministry of Gas failed to provide the now "independent" Turkmenistan with hard-currency payments for the gas shipped abroad through Russia's pipeline.⁵²

However, Turkmenistan is going about developing its oil cautiously, working with both US firms and Italian firms, and being careful to give no single firm or country exclusive or even dominant interest in their oil industry.⁵³

Moreover, though Niazov views it as a problem of special importance to have close ties with Iran, he travelled to Iran for the ECO meeting, as did Nabiev and Karimov. He also made a well-publicized state visit to Turkey in December and plans a similar trip to Pakistan.⁵⁴

Uzbekistan's Policy Goals

Though equally desirous of attracting foreign economic aid and investment as other Central Asians states, Uzbekistan's government has been more cautious about privatizing its economy. Critics

of Islam Karimov charge him of trying to retain power in his own hands. His retort, not unreasonably, is that the complexity of the republic's problems (massive unemployment especially in rural areas, the cotton monoculture, the acute water shortage) merit careful consideration before the government decides on a strategy for dispersing its property. Moreover, the challenge of economic development in Uzbekistan is so complex that Karimov's critics, and they are many, have not wanted to risk their own political futures by advocating poorly thought out schemes of their own.

Uzbekistan's service sector has always been partly privatized; there has been a second pricing system in existence for nearly 20 years. Now stores and restaurants will be sold to enable *de jure* rather than *de facto* ownership of property. However, Uzbekistan's government has been slow to produce a plan to fully privatize the economy.

Uzbekistan's government was the first to legislate land reforms in agriculture, turning over land to private management in 1990. Currently there is a lively debate over whether full private ownership should be supported.

Karimov, however, would certainly like to improve his image in the West and has hired a prominent Washington-based law firm to help him in this effort. He has enlisted their support in developing legislation for state-building and designing economic reforms that would attract in Western investment banks.

However, Karimov has also been actively encouraging investment by his Muslim neighbors and in recent months, high level delegations have come to the area from Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia. Karimov himself has made trips to Turkey and Iran.

Unlike Nazarbaev and Akaev, Karimov, head of an overwhelmingly Muslim republic, is comfortable playing the role of an Islamic leader. He now claims to be a believer himself, and after his popular election to the presidency, he swore his oath of loyalty with his hand on the Koran.⁵⁵ This was despite the fact that the "greening" of Uzbekistan is sure to drive out local Russians from the republic at an ever faster rate.

Turkey, by Karimov's own admission, is the most attractive model for Uzbekistan to pursue.⁵⁶ He would much prefer to pit his Muslim neighbors against one another than to choose between them.

Karimov's main goal is to ensure that Uzbekistan is able to function as an independent country with its own telecommunications system, airlines, television and radio services, as well as a sound economic base.

It is precisely because of its willingness to try and supply such infrastructural kinds of supports that Karimov has greeted Iran's overtures with enthusiasm. His dealings with Iran in this area will not preclude him from actively seeking Turkish and Pakistani aid and investment in light-industrial based economic investment projects. He has also received Israeli delegations interested in investing in the republic, and he is encouraging Uzbeks to develop ties with Israelis in general and Jewish émigrés from Tashkent in particular.

More than any other Central Asian republic, Uzbekistan is a likely site for major Saudi Arabian investment, because it offers a confluence of economic and political goals. Saudis want to invest in the area to counter Iran's growing influence, and Uzbekistan's size (more than 20 million people) would make it an appropriate center for operations. Moreover, unlike the Kazakhs, the Uzbeks are comfortable in making a public identification with Islam.

Thus, the Saudis are now offering the Uzbeks financial aid, educational assistance, and help in the development of their energy resources.⁵⁷ Moreover, by taking aid from the Saudis, Karimov is able to demonstrate to Uzbekistan's Islamic opposition that he is a credible **Muslim** ruler.

Karimov's problem is not just from whom to take aid, but how best to use it. Uzbekistan may be able to develop a stable and largely self-propelling economy over time, especially since Uzbekistan has a quarter of the gold reserves of the former Soviet Union. But for now at least, its economic crisis is a severe one, and that works to the advantage of the political opposition in the republic.

Neighborly Assistance

At the same time that the collapse of the USSR's political center has forced Central Asians to reassess their own geopolitical situation, they must look for new potential sources of financial and technological assistance. The situation has also given Central Asia's neighbors new opportunities to reassess their own geopolitical situations.

For the first time in its modern history, Central Asia is being permitted to join the Muslim world. Representatives of these republics have attended two recent international conferences, a meeting of the Conference of Islamic Organizations, held in Dakar,⁵⁸ and the Tehran meeting of the Economic Council Organization that convened in February 1992. The latter organization has already admitted Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan, with the other three republics expecting invitations to join. To date, only Azerbaijan has joined the Conference of Islamic Organizations.

While several Muslim states have shown interest in developments in Central Asia, only Turkey and Iran have defined their involvement in the region as being in direct pursuit of their own strategic ends.

Since 1989, Turkey's government has made improved ties with the Caucasian and Central Asian republics a stated goal of their foreign policy.⁵⁹ Pro-Western, Muslim, and democratic, with an expanding market economy, Turkey, especially in the person of President Ozal, believes itself to be a natural model for the four Turkish republics of Central Asia as well as for Azerbaijan. Moreover, this goal has been restated by the new Demirel government.⁶⁰

Iran's leaders have announced that they must play a greater role in order to counter the influence of Turkey, a nation they claim is seeking influence in Central Asia in order to defeat the forces of Islamic revivalism.⁶¹ Iran's foreign minister Ali Akbar Velayati spent November 1991 in the USSR, with the bulk of his stay devoted to the six Muslim republics. Everywhere he travelled, he committed Iranian aid and economic assistance, as well as stressing Iran's natural willingness to help with religious education.

Iran's growing presence seems also to be stimulating the small but swelling Saudi Arabian presence in the area. The Saudis, too, are providing religious literature and making donations to the building funds of religious societies. Saudi Arabia is also helping to fund the distribution of Korans, rebuilding of religious schools, and mass pilgrimages to Mecca. More importantly, they, too, are willing to help the Central Asians set up a new financial system.⁶²

Despite this increased interest in Central Asia's political affairs, all of these states have been cautious. None is eager to risk venture capital in

unstable societies. But more importantly, all are eager to act in ways that did not threaten their formal ties to Russia, for Russia is either a major trade partner or arms supplier of each of them.

Furthermore, after 70 years of Soviet domination, Central Asia's leaders are determined to avoid constructing deliberate or inadvertent dependency-based relations with foreign partners. Moreover, all of Central Asia's leaders are committed to building secular or quasi-secular states and have been trying to balance the interest of their Muslim neighbors with foreign investment by non-Muslim states. Thus, despite the desperateness of their plight, Central Asia's leaders are determined to proceed cautiously. They recognize that it will be a real challenge for the new Central Asian states to obtain the economic assistance they need and still preserve their political autonomy.

For the moment at least, Central Asia's leaders are not concerned about linkage between foreign aid and domestic politics. All of the region's leaders are trained in Marxist economics and despite their recent conversion to market economics, all believe that economic decay causes political instability, rather than the reverse. Thus, they feel that aid from Iran will not benefit their Islamic opposition nearly as much as would refusing to take such aid and so delay prospects of economic recovery.

While it is true that over time the collapse of communism may prove to be an inadvertent victory for either Iran or Turkey, for the moment it is not clear which power if any will come to dominate in the region. The Central Asian leaders all prefer dealing with Turkey but are happy to take Iran's often more attractive terms of investment. However, the struggle between them is not likely to be a two party one. As Iranian influence in the region increases, Arab investment in the area is sure to increase as well. Moreover, though slower off the mark, the Pakistanis are also eager to play an active role in the economy of the region.

In fact, in the long run, the stake of Central Asia's Southwest Asian neighbors in the former Soviet republics is not nearly as great as that of China, which has its own "Turkestani" problem. Central Asia is a source of trade for Chinese Turkestan, but it is also a source of possible ideological contamination. Thus since the fall of the USSR, Beijing has been eager to transfer relations from a regional basis (Xinjiang Province dealing with

Central Asia's republics) to a state-to-state basis, in which ambassadors will be exchanged between Beijing and each of these new Central Asian states.

Certainly, the fall of Soviet rule in the region will have an impact in Southwest Asia, as it must on all of the Soviet Union's former borders. But here as everywhere else, the impact is neither immediate nor clear cut. Part of the reason for this uncertainty is that it is unclear whether Russia's departure is a permanent one, or if a "non-democratic" government in Moscow will try to retake all or part of this area.

If Russia itself holds together, it will probably become the major foreign influence in Central Asia. If it does not, there is no clear probable inheritor in Central Asia at least to Moscow's influence. From the Central Asian viewpoint, this is clearly as it should be, for more than anything else, the Central Asians want the time to work out their post-colonial futures without being under the looming shadow of a neighboring great power.

Endnotes

1. Only Kyrgyzstan's Askar Akaev immediately came out against the coup. *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*, 19 August 1991.

2. Akaev, the only President in the region not the former head of his republic's communist party, was an active proponent of the dissolution of Kyrgyzstan's communist party on ideological grounds. Nazarbaev accepted the need for the dissolution of Kazakhstan's communist party on practical grounds. Karimov and Niazov decided upon the symbolic dissolution of Uzbekistan's and Turkmenistan's communist parties. Nabiev made the dissolution of Tajikistan's communist party a temporary gesture, allowing it to reemerge in February 1992, after he had won election as President of his republic.

3. Islam Karimov, press conference, Uzbekistan television, 20 September 1991.

4. *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 2 October 1992.

5. *Izvestia*, 13 December 1991.

6. *Izvestia*, 19 October 1991.

7. *Vremya*, Central Television, Program 1, 10 December 1991.

8. *Izvestia*, 23 December 1991.

9. Even in the late 1980s on the eve of the current collapse, Uzbekistan's and Tajikistan's leaders were complaining that the majority of their populations lived below the poverty level.

10. Boris Z. Rumer, *Soviet Central Asia: "A Tragic Experiment,"* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 118-119.

11. *Literaturnai gazeta*, no. 40, 1991, 2.

12. For an assessment of the current situation, see Gregory Gleason, "The Struggle for Control over Water in Central Asia: Republican Sovereignty and Collective Action," *Radio Liberty Report on the USSR*, 21 June 1991, 11-14.

13. *Ogonek*, no. 23, 1991, 20-21.

14. *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 23 June 1990.

15. *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 17 August 1991.

16. Akaev's union was to be a looser one than Nazarbaev, for Kazakhstan did not declare its independence until 16 December 1991. *Izvestia*, 17 December 1991.

17. Nabiev got 57.8 percent of the vote. *Izvestia*, 27 November 1991.

18. Turkmenistan's independence was declared 27 October 1991. Kyrgyzstan's independence was declared 31 August 1991, and Uzbekistan's less than a month later.

19. *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*, 18 December 1992.

20. *FBIS Daily Report: Central Eurasia*, 5 February 1992, (FBIS-SOV-92-026; 10), from 2 February 1992 broadcast on Radio Odin.

21. *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 7 February 1992.

22. *FBIS Daily Report: Central Eurasia*, 6 February 1992, (FBIS-SOV-92-025; 68-70), a television interview from 2 February 1992.

23. *FBIS Daily Report: Central Eurasia*, 27 January 1992, (FBIS-SOV-92-017; 65), from Dushambe radio, 24 January 1992.

24. *FBIS Daily Report: Central Eurasia*, 30 January 1992, (FBIS-SOV-92-020; 13), from TASS, 29 January 1992.

25. However, by the 1989 census, they are under 40 percent of the population. *Soiuz*, no. 20, 1990.

26. For an example, see *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 30 January 1992.

27. *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 24 January 1992.

28. *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 29 June 1991.

29. *Moskovskie novosti*, no. 22, 1991.

30. *FBIS Daily Report: Central Eurasia*, 22 January 1992, (FBIS-SOV-92-014; 82), from Interfax, 19 January 1992.

31. *FBIS Daily Report: Central Eurasia*, 30 January 1992, (FBIS-SOV-92-020; 61), from Tass 29 January 1992.

32. *FBIS Daily Report: Soviet Union*, 18 March 1991, (FBIS-SOV-91-052; 74), Ankara Domestic Service, 16 March 1991.

33. *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 25 September 1991.

34. *FBIS Daily Report: Central Eurasia*, 7 February 1992, (FBIS-SOV-92-026; 2), Tass release of interview, 6 February 1992.

35. *FBIS Daily Report: Soviet Union*, 23 May 1991, (FBIS-SOV-91-100; 16.)

36. *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 16 July 1991.

37. *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 21 September 1991.

38. *Kazakhstanskaia pravda*, 22 January 1992.

39. The strong sense of Kyrgyz nationhood is probably a result of the historic isolation of these peoples, pastoral nomads who confined their migration to travelling the Tien Shan mountains in search of seasonal passage. This relative isolation also limited their contact with the greater Muslim world.

40. *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*, 18 December 1992.

41. *FBIS Daily Report: Soviet Union*, 16 December 1992, (FBIS-SOV-91-214; 80), from Central television, 8 December 1991.

42. *FBIS Daily Report: Soviet Union*, 6 November, 1991, (FBIS-SOV-91-215; 74), from Interfax, 6 November 1991.

43. *FBIS Daily Report: Central Eurasia*, 4 February 1992, (FBIS-SOV-92-023; 68), Interfax, 1 February 1992.

44. *FBIS Daily Report: Central Eurasia*, 4 February 1992, (FBIS-SOV-92-023; 68), from Radio Mayak, 28 January 1992.

45. *FBIS Daily Report: Soviet Union*, 4 December 1991, (FBIS-SOV-91-223; 81), from Tehran TV 29 November 1991.

46. *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*, 24 December 1991.

47. *FBIS Daily Report: Soviet Union*, 4 December 1991.

(FBIS-SOV-91-233; 81-83)

48. *FBIS Daily Report: Central Eurasia*, 10 February 1992, (FBIS-SOV-92-027; 78), from Tehran IRNA, 6 February 1992.

49. *FBIS Daily Report: Soviet Union*, 21 November 1991, (FBIS-SOV-91-225; 89), Radio Mayak, 20 November 1991.

50. *FBIS Daily Report: Soviet Union*, 4 December 1991, (FBIS-SOV-91-233; 81-83)

51. *FBIS Daily Report: Central Eurasia*, 4 February 1992, (FBIS-SOV-92-023; 70), from Postfaktum, 28 January 1991.

52. *Komsomol'skaia pravda*, 8 February 1992, 3.

53. *Komsomol'skaia pravda*, 17 July 17 1991.

54. *JPRS Daily Report: Central Eurasia, Baltic and Eurasian*

States, (JPRS-USR-92-004; 88), from *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 25 December 1991.

55. *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 7 January 1992.

56. *Izvestia*, 20 December 1991.

57. *New York Times*, 22 February 1992, 4.

58. *Izvestia*, 10 December 1991.

59. *FBIS Daily Report: Western Europe*, 20 November 1991, (FBIS-WEU-91-220; 60)

60. *FBIS Daily Report: Western Europe*, 6 December 1991, (FBIS-WEU-91-235; 40)

61. *Izvestia*, 3 December 1991.

62. *Izvestia*, 6 December 1990.

Central Asian Republics: New Elements in Regional Politics

Olivier Roy

Introduction

Most Central Asians are Turkish-speaking Sunni Muslims who were artificially divided by Stalin into "nationalities." Now, however, despite the efforts of some active Islamist movements who oppose the division of the Muslim *Umma* into nations, these national entities have taken root, and nation-states have been created in Central Asia. Even so, they are not absolutely homogeneous. Persian-speakers, for example, are found in Turkic Uzbekistan, and Ismaelites make up an important part of Persian-speaking, Sunni Tajikistan.

Among the five Central Asian republics, Kazakhstan's destiny is separate. It is the only really bi-ethnic state (half Russian, half Kazakh), and Islam has not yet been politicized. Kazakhstan's outlook is more to the west toward Europe and to the east toward Japan and Korea than to the south. Its nuclear capacity, or at least potential, has placed Kazakhstan on the world scene, and therefore, unlike its Central Asian neighbors, it does not need any broker among the regional powers.

The independence of the Central Asian republics alters regional politics in three ways. First, statehood provides national poles of reference for such ethnic minorities as Turkmens, Uzbeks, Tajiks, and Azeris in Iran and Afghanistan, where they have always been deprived of their own nation-states.

Second, these new states provide a field for competition between Turkey, Iran, and to a lesser extent, Pakistan. This competition might elevate Turkey's status as a regional power above the others, thus creating a new and unstable balance of power among these three countries and causing an unanticipated side effect of altering the balance of power in Middle East.

Third, these newly independent states might provide a boost for such political ideologies as pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism, making Turkey virtually a world power in the first case, or in the latter case, enhancing the influence of Islamic countries in world politics.

Political Evolution of the Region

The following are three possible scenarios of the political evolution of this region, from most to least probable.

Scenario one. These new nations will be relatively stable, maintain cooperation between themselves and with Moscow, and play on the rivalry among Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan to gain access to the Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean without falling under foreign sway.

Scenario two. Nationalist and ethnic feuds, fueled by social protest due to a dramatic economic situation, will lead to a "Balkanization" of the area which might spread into neighboring countries. In this case, Iran and Afghanistan will be weakened because of the spillover of Central Asian nationalisms among their own ethnic minorities. By contrast, Turkey will gain more influence in the area because its internal situation could not be modified by convulsions in Central Asia.

Scenario three. If the ruling regimes begin to weaken, "pan-ism" ideologies such as pan-Islamism, pan-Turkism, and pan-Iranism might provide an alternative political focus and be used as leverage by contending regional powers Turkey, Iran, and a joint Saudi Arabia-Pakistan venture.

The key factors in the above scenarios will be: 1) the ability of the ruling regimes in the Central Asian republics to cope with social protest and Islamic

opposition; 2) the attitudes of Turkey and Iran; and 3) the strength of the Islamic factor

Reshaping Central Asia through Nation-States Based on Ethnicity

After the fall of communism, nationalism and Islam have become the new legitimate foci for political power. Ruling elites have shed their communist identities and, except for the Islamists, now play on nationalism. Nationalism, however, can be both a stabilizing and a destabilizing factor. It can be used to legitimize and thus stabilize the newly independent republics, but it also automatically arouses the minorities question, which in turn challenges the borders between republics or states. As a result, nationalism may open the door for domestic, inter-republic, or inter-state conflicts.

The present republics are a result of Stalin's division in the 1920s; they are based on territories and borders, albeit artificial, and on an ethnic identity which has been interiorized by the bulk of the population. Notions that were rather distinct are now merging together: nationality, citizenship, ethnicity, and linguistic identity. An Uzbek is somebody who speaks Uzbek, and who, even when living in Tajikistan, tends more and more to claim Uzbek nationality, which could turn into Uzbek citizenship.

Present political parties, whether the ruling communists or the nationalist opposition (except the Islamic Renaissance Party), draw their legitimacy from the existence of these nation-states. Even the Muslim clergy tends to organize itself along national divisions. (Kazakhstan, for example, does not recognize the Uzbek Mufti.) International and diplomatic recognition bestowed on these republics will tend to reinforce national identities which are unlikely to yield to "pan-ism" ideologies, but might provoke conflicts.

Although in progress, the process of national identification is not yet completed. In Turkmenistan, for example, Turkmen-speakers without tribal affiliation who are of Iranian descent (descendants of the Persian slaves abducted in the nineteenth century) might develop an "Iranian" identity in a contest for power with the ruling elite, which is from pure tribal lineage (with the notable exception of President Niazov). Throughout Central Asia,

Persian-speakers are sometimes uneasy about their own "ethnic" identity: are they "Bukharis," "Tajiks," Sunni Muslim Persian-speakers, or "Iranians?"

Lack of resolution between official national/ethnic identities and self-consciousness might provide a source of internal dissent. An interesting case is that of Tajikistan. One hears in Dushambe about four definitions of a Tajik: 1) Sunni Persian-speakers from Badakhshan mountains, including Afghan Badakhshan; 2) all Central Asian Sunni Persian-speakers, including people from Samarkand and Bukhara, thus contending Uzbekistan's borders; 3) "Soghdians," the former inhabitants of Central Asia, including "Uzbekicized" oasis and city-dwellers, as opposed to the nomadic Turkish tribes (in this case most of the Uzbeks are "Soghdians"); and 4) "Iranians," meaning all Persian-speakers, whether Shia or Sunni, are of the same stock (this trend is represented in Dushambe by a "Kurush-i Kabir" association, a reference to Cyrus bypassing the Muslim identity and referring to the only period when an "Iranian" power ruled Central Asia).

Whatever the classification of ethnic groups, no republic is ethnically homogeneous. Twenty percent of the inhabitants of Tajikistan are Uzbeks, while the two most famous cities of Uzbekistan, Samarkand and Bukhara, are "Tajik" (meaning that the center and the historical population are mainly Persian-speakers, but the suburbs are Uzbek). In case of a nationalist outbidding, the republican governments will campaign for the "protection" of their ethnic brothers outside their borders: Tajikistan for the "Tajiks" of Samarkand and Bukhara, Uzbekistan for the Uzbeks living in Tajikistan and in Afghanistan. These feuds are all the more likely to arise because borders are artificial and not stable. Ferghana and Zarafshan valleys, for instance, are a patchwork of linguistic groups who ignore the recently created political borders. Water, a scarce resource throughout the region, is made all the more contentious since all springs are in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

The main regional contest for power will be between Uzbekistan and all other republics. Uzbekistan, with its population of 20 million, modern elites, direct links with Moscow and central authority, and claims for a natural leadership of Central Asia, could ignore "pan-Turkism" and campaign instead for a "Greater Uzbekistan."

Finally, the internationally recognized borders between Central Asia and Iran or Afghanistan are not ethnic borders: Azeris, Turkmens, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Ismaelis, and Kirghiz live on both sides of the borders. Even if the Central Asian Republics are stable, the emergence of states based on ethnicity might have a destabilizing effect on Iran and Afghanistan, where state legitimacy has almost never been based on ethnicity (except in Iran during the time of the two last Shahs and in Afghanistan under the rule of former President Daud). Traditionally in Iran, loyalty to the state is based on Shiism: Azeris and Arabs, who are Shia, have always been loyal to the state, but Kurds, Baluchis, and Turkmens never really recognized the central power as their own, even if it was of Iranian culture.

The national question is not yet an immediate issue, but a long-term trend. In fact, today, the only political forces to put ethnic-based nationalism on the forefront are the opposition: Colonel Turkes Party in Turkey, Birlik and Erk in Uzbekistan, Rastakhiz in Tajikistan, Setam-i Milli and Afghan Mellat in Afghanistan. All the ruling parties and the ethnic opposition play down the ethnic question. The Uzbek People's Democratic Party, the new name of the former communist party, might be the most nationalist of all; but the nationalism of the Tajik, Turkmen, and Kirghiz ruling parties is rather defensive against Uzbek encroachments and more aimed at gaining popular support than redefining the borders.

Bitterness and *revanchism* over lost territory color Tajik public opinion. Tajiks have never accepted Uzbek jurisdiction over Bukhara and Samarkand, however, greater Tajikistan, including at least Afghan Badakhshan, is not popular. The war in Afghanistan and the bad reputation the Afghans gained in Dushambe have apparently discouraged the Tajik public from calling for unification with a part of their southern neighbor.

In any case, as long as the existing regimes are in charge, from Ankara to Dushambe through Tehran and Kabul, ethnic solidarity will not be the main government motto. The apparatchiks of the five Central Asian republics who speak Russian among themselves will maintain solidarity among themselves. In Iran and Afghanistan, ethnic nationalism does not fit well with the legitimacy of the ruling regimes. Even in Turkey, as we shall see, ethnic nationalism has been downplayed recently.

This may change. The nationalist opposition may take power in Uzbekistan. Even more likely, the communist government may promote nationalism in the face of an economic collapse and the elimination of their "brothers in apparat," as rulers in the other republics, which is likely to happen in Tajikistan.

Domestic Factors with Regional Implications

Four main political forces can be identified in the Central Asian republics. Each has important regional implications.

1. The Ruling Parties. The ruling parties are secular but not ideologically motivated; they are conservative and based on patron-client networks, where family ties and, more than anything else, geographical origin (localism, or *mahalgerâ'y* in Tajik) are the key factors for political factionalism. These parties rule like many Third World one-party systems, tolerating an opposition and elections as long that they do not lose. Contrary to the Russian Communist Party, the Central Asian parties are well rooted in the society, because they work vertically and not as a separate *nomenklatura*. Any remote *kolkhoz* has an access to the ruling elites, thanks to its members who made their way through the party's hierarchy. Local apparatchiks are of local extraction and are thus accepted by the population, which considers them more as local notables than as representatives of the state.

Despite nationalist tensions, the ruling parties maintain ties of solidarity between themselves and agree on some common policies: to keep close ties with Moscow as long as possible, to maintain "Russian" troops on their territory, to fight against political Islam, and to support Najibullah's regime in Afghanistan. Tensions between them will arise over borders, minorities, and trade.

The Tajik Party, which restored its Communist Party name, and the Turkmen party are the most conservative; the Kirghiz and the Kazakh are the most open.

2. The Nationalist Opposition. The nationalist opposition, sometimes called the "democratic opposition," originally based itself on "ethnic nationalism." Interestingly enough, it advocates the Stalinist definition of a nation: a territory, a culture,

a language, and a cultural identity. The nationalists used to rewrite history: Uzbek historians said Central Asia was always "Turkic" whereas Tajiks said it was "Soghdian." Consequently, the nationalist opposition was never pan-Turkic. Uzbeks, for example, were pan-Uzbek. Now their motto is "authenticity," and their bases are the existing states whose borders they contest in the old imperialist way. For Uzbeks, the Zarafshan valley of Tajikistan is Uzbek; for Tajiks, Samarkand and Boukhara are Tajik cities.

Nationalist opposition is especially strong in Uzbekistan (Birlik). In Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, the present regimes are using the nationalist motto for their own sake. In Tajikistan, the nationalist opposition, represented by the Rastakhiz movement, is hampered by the Tajik identity crisis. Most nationalists recruit among the urban intelligentsia, only Birlik seems to have roots in the countryside, but they are limited to creating an alliance with the parallel clergy. Everywhere, the nationalist opposition has to include Islam, more (Birlik) or less (Tajikistan) enthusiastically, as part of the national heritage, and democracy as a part of its motto.

3. The Democratic Opposition. The democratic opposition as such is rather weak. It included at the beginning Europeans and natives of mixed origins, all of them intellectuals influenced by "perestroika." Now the democratic opposition has almost been swallowed up by the nationalist movement, except in Tajikistan where the "Hizb-i Demokrat" of Shadman Yusupov is stronger than Rastakhiz.

4. The Islamic Political Opposition. Since 1988, Islam has become visible. Mosques have re-opened, mullahs are active, and religious schools are under construction. This does not mean that a wave of fundamentalism has engulfed Central Asia; Islam had always remained active in the underground and has now made a comeback. Pervasive, but neither vocal nor organized, fundamentalism is a characteristic of the majority of the parallel clergy, which, even when advocating the Islamicization of state law and everyday life, rarely openly contests existing regimes. An Islamic political opposition, the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP), recently has made a breakthrough in Russia, Tajikistan, and some parts of Uzbekistan. It was founded in July

1990 by Tatars and Daghestanis and has taken roots in Tajikistan and Ferghana. Its ideology is the same than the Arab Muslim Brothers, and it supports Algerian FIS.

In addition to the political forces in Central Asia mentioned above, several Russian movements, such as Interfront and Intersoyuz, maintain networks among the European population of Central Asia even though they lost leverage after the failure of the August coup.

Due to the authoritarian tendencies of the ruling parties, the Islamist and Nationalist-Democratic opposition have become allies. For example, in Tajikistan, the IRP, Rastakhiz, and Democratic Party chose a common candidate for the presidential elections of December 1991. Khodanazar, an Ismaeli from Badakhshan, received approximately 35 percent of the vote. Such tactical alliances, however, will not outlive a success.

The Regional Powers

The Central Asian republics moved reluctantly towards independence. Land-locked, impoverished by monoculture, pollution, demographic growth, and largely deprived of modern elites, they are looking for any patronage they can find. Three regional countries are openly contending for influence in the Central Asian Republics: Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan. Each claims historical, cultural, and ideological motivations. The paradox is that these countries are more interested in trying to prevent the others from filling the vacuum in Central Asia than in establishing a new geostrategic order. The confrontation will lead to a kind of cooperation despite vocal controversies. In fact, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan are the last countries in the area where state legitimacy is not based on ethnic nationalism. The emergence of ethnic nationalism in the Caucasus and Central Asia is a short term threat for Afghanistan and a long term threat for Iran and Pakistan.

Iran. Iran hoped, until the end, that Moscow would retain some authority in Central Asia. The Islamic Republic of Iran has focused its foreign policy activity toward the west and south (the Persian Gulf, Middle East, and to a lesser extent Africa), as did the Shah, using Islam to enhance its own legitimacy and undermine Arab influence. By contrast, Tehran has

always been eager to "freeze" the situation on its northern and eastern borders. It systematically restrained the Afghan Shia mujahidin and dealt with the ruling authorities. To the north, Tehran made less fuss over Soviet secularism than with its Ataturk counterpart. This view is supported by the fact that Iranian radicals focused all their efforts on the west (from Lebanon to the Sudan), but let the freer hand of the moderates (Velayati) handle the east and north.

At the time of the collapse of the Soviet empire, the future seemed bleak from Tehran's point of view. If nationalism prevails in Central Asia, it will be anti-Iranian, due in part to a rejection of the Persian part of its heritage, which will be harmful to its only potential ally, Tajikistan, which is weak and isolated. In this case, Turkic solidarity will play in favor of Ankara, even if pan-Turkism does not make a breakthrough. Iran will be surrounded from northwest to northeast by a Turkic belt which might attract Iranian Azeris and Turkmens. If Islamic fundamentalism prevails over nationalism, it will work in favor of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia or the Arab Muslim Brothers. A victory of the fundamentalist Afghan mujahidin will make things worse. In this case, Shia Iran will be surrounded clockwise from north to southwest by pro-Arab and/or Sunni fundamentalists.

Thus, Tehran is paradoxically supporting the existing ex-communist regimes from Tashkent to Kabul. Even in Tajikistan, where Iranian influence is greatest and the communist regime weakest, Tehran has taken care to put the mullahs and the communist party on equal footing.

Tehran is not playing the ethnic card in Central Asia as it has in Afghanistan. Iran has of course used the Shia as a political tool from Lebanon to Pakistan and is keeping the Afghan Shia card up its sleeve, but it has never promoted "all-Persian" solidarity. Afghan Persian-speaking mujahidin, like Masoud, never got any specific Iranian support. The nationalist circles in the Iranian opposition are also avoiding the "ethnic" card. Tehran has no designs on the western part of Afghanistan, whose integration into Iran would dilute Iran's Shia identity. Tehran is already alarmed by the "Sunnitization" of Khorasan Province, where the influx of Afghan refugees has made the majority of the population Sunni.

Interestingly enough, the only place where an

"all-Persian" identity is nursed is Tajikistan, with the "Kurosh-i Kabir" group ("Cyrus the Great"). Tajikistan officially adopted the Persian alphabet, but the choice had nothing to do with ideology, either pan-Islamism or pan-Iranism. Tajikistan simply decided its survival depended on Iran. The decision will bring no money but it will bring a few barrels of oil and, paradoxically, an opening to the West since Western books are often translated in Iran and the Iranian universities can train Tajik professionals.

Tehran's main objective is defensive in nature. Iran is muscling into Central Asia to prevent Turkey from being hegemonic there and is trying to prevent the spill over of ethnic nationalism into its own borders. Iran's rear guard battle to convince the other republics to adopt the Arab alphabet instead of the Latin one, is to block a Turkish breakthrough in culture, media, and education.

Even if Iran cannot check the Turkish influence, it is unlikely to be a total loser. Economic and geo-strategic constraints will push the Central Asian republics into an agreement with Iran. Access to the seas and communications lines with the outside world will go through Iran, especially if Russia remains unstable in the coming years. Iran also can deliver much needed oil. Politically, Iran is useful to the ruling regimes as a check on Islamic radicalism and any opposition based on "Iranism" not just in Tajikistan, but also among the Persian-speakers of Uzbekistan, and the Turkmens of Iranian descent, who constitute nearly one-third of the Turkmen Republic.

Even Turkmenistan, which has a centuries-old controversy with Iran, is eager to establish good relations, since Turkey cannot provide access roads to the seas and the West.

Finally, Iranian influence will be dominant in Tajikistan, which already has switched to the Arab alphabet and has given up the idea that "Tajik" is a language which differs from Persian. Russian borrowed names are being replaced by Iranian ones through a "Foundation for the Persian Language." Whatever the regime, Tajikistan will need a godfather against the Uzbek Turks.

Turkey and the Myth of Pan-Turkism. Except for some far-rightist associations in Turkey and small groups in Uzbekistan (ERK, headed by Muhammad Salih), pan-Turkish political

organizations do not exist in the Turkish-speaking world. Uzbek is not understandable to the Istanbul Turk. Turkey and Central Asia never formed a common political entity in history. Even the Ottoman Empire was not pan-Turkist. Persian culture has influenced Central Asian civilization far more than Turkish. Pan-Turkism is only the sense of sharing a common linguistic heritage and a more moderate vision of Islam than the one prevailing among Persian-speakers, whether Shia or Sunni. As in Afghanistan, Tajiks are considered by other Central Asians as more religious-minded: many Uzbek villages chose a Persian mullah, as did Pashtuns in western Afghanistan.

Nevertheless Turkey's policy toward Central Asia has undergone a major reassessment since the fall of the USSR. Turkey has shifted from an exclusively Europe-oriented (and European-looking) policy toward a search for multi-directional regional power status. Turkey as a regional power has no interest in pushing pan-Turkism, but it also has to give up some other key Kemalist taboos, Kurds, Armenians, Islam, and the Middle East, in order to find interlocutors and bridgeheads to act as referees while not antagonizing other regional actors. Kurds exist, Armenians are no longer the arch-enemy, and Turkey is a Muslim country that should play a role in Middle East. This reassessment, initiated by Ozal, has been endorsed by the new Prime Minister, Suleiman Demirel, although it might be challenged by public opinion with increases in Kurdish terrorism and Armenian victories in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Turkey has no intention of adopting a pan-Turkic policy to unite all Turkish-speaking areas into a single political entity. Such an entity has never existed; it would antagonize other regional actors (Armenians, Iranians, Arabs, and Russians) and prevent Turkey from becoming a regional power. Turkey's preference is to play the role of referee. It can present itself as a model of development, as a provider of "cheap" tools for development (know-how, training, factories, consumer goods), and as a stabilizing factor in the area.

In these conditions, "pan-Turkism" plays the same role that *francophonie* does for France. It is an instrument of prestige and rhetoric which appeals to the heart but leaves the mind cold.

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to think that Turkish influence might check Islamic influence.

"Official" Turks will be neutral as far as Islam is concerned, but the same is not true for the others. Turkish Islamist organizations, like Milli Görüs based in Germany, are already active in Central Asia. Turkey is not perceived by the Central Asian population as a secular country but rather as a Muslim one, and its path of development is seen by most people as a good compromise between Islam and modernism, not as a model of secularization. Whatever the prevailing scenario, however, Turkey has nothing to lose in the evolution of the situation.

Pakistan. Pakistan would like to become a patron of the new republics, but it has few means to do so compared with Iran and Turkey, unless it undertakes a joint venture with the Saudis. The tool of Pakistani influence until recently has been the radical Afghan mujahidin (Hekmatyar). The Pakistani military hoped they could take power in Afghanistan and then spill over into Soviet Central Asia. Hekmatyar was encouraged in 1987 to launch direct attacks into Soviet Union.

Islamabad underwent a reassessment of its policy in December 1991. It accepted the UN settlement plan for Afghanistan, in which the mujahidin was to give up any idea of a military victory; meanwhile Pakistani officials were touring the new Central Asian republics. Behind this reassessment are new hypotheses for Pakistan: 1) the ruling regimes in Central Asia are stable; 2) the only thing Pakistan has to offer is a direct road from Central Asia to Karachi through Kabul (this supposes a settlement in Afghanistan); and 3) the identification of Pakistan's policy with the more radical Afghan mujahidin is counterproductive.

This new policy is encountering opposition from certain military circles and from the Jamaat-i Islami. It might also have come too late: the actual division of the Afghan mujahidin along ideological, tribal, and ethnic lines had been largely encouraged by the Pakistani services, which are losing their leverage on the mujahidin due to the end of the military supplies from the West.

In case of a *de facto* partition of Afghanistan between south and north, Pakistan will be confronted by the presence of an unruly Pashtun tribal belt on both sides of its borders, where drug trafficking and weapons smuggling had already given autonomy to local tribal warlords. Until now, the Pakistani services have been able to deal with

and use these local commanders. In a way, the war and drug trafficking provided an economic boost for the whole Northwest Frontier Province. Paradoxically, the Pashtuns are the only ethnic group in the area which have not developed an ethnic-based nationalism. Pashtun nationalists from Pakistan did rather poorly in the NWFP elections; Afghan Pashtuns still hope to reconstruct a multi-ethnic Afghanistan under their rule. But the development of ethnic-based nationalisms is a fact in Sindh and Kashmir and might endanger the existence of Pakistan in the case of a division of Afghanistan along ethnic lines.

Afghanistan. Political evolution in Central Asia might accelerate the process of disintegration of Afghanistan along ethnic lines. This process, with Pashtun on one side and non-Pashtun on the other, has been obvious among the mujahidin from the outset of the war but today is clearly visible inside the regime.

The influence of the Afghan mujahidin is weak in Central Asia. First, many young, educated Central Asians spent years in Afghanistan as civil experts in order to avoid service in the military: they are not very friendly toward the mujahidin. War in Afghanistan is seen by the bulk of the Central Asian population as a civil war, not a *jihad*. Second, the mujahidin never really tried to be influential in Central Asia: cross-border operations were limited to some neighboring villages. Islamic propaganda was made up of booklets translated from Arabic or Urdu, thus conveying more Muslim Brothers and Mawdudi influence than mujahidin (who, by the way, never produced any valuable political thought). Third, ethnic solidarity worked the other way round, from the north to the south: the Uzbeks sent experts into northern Afghanistan. By contrast, most of the numerous Afghans living in Central Asia are drug traffickers and smugglers and are despised by the population. Although the Tajik nationalists suggest stopping the support for Najibullah (as the candidate of the opposition in last December's presidential elections, Khodanazar, stated in June 1991), they do not advocate a change of alliance. The IRP is the only group to support the Afghan mujahidin but probably has no direct link with them.

The Afghan war could have long term implications. There are two possibilities. First, the restoration of a stable central Afghan state may

occur. In this case, Afghanistan will become a link between Central Asia and the rest of the world because of its thriving tradition of trade, currency exchange markets, and smuggling. The second possibility is more likely: the perpetuation of an unstable situation. A refusal by the Pashtuns, whatever their ideological affiliations, to really share the power with the Persian-speakers might lead to the partition of Afghanistan along *de facto* ethnic lines. In this case, the Hazara will look toward Iran, the Uzbek toward Tashkent, the Pashtun toward Pakistan. As far as the so-called Tajiks are concerned, they might first establish their own "kingdom" in the northeast. Then, in case of turmoil in Tajikistan, they might be called to interfere. Masoud has no imperialist vision and stated recently, with Rabbani, that he is in favor of the existing borders, but if he is blocked by the Pashtun (whatever their ideology) toward Kabul in the south, he might look north. As long as a communist regime remains in Dushambe, Masoud is unlikely to interfere: solidarity will work among the ex-communist regimes.

Masoud is likely to intervene in the following scenario. The communist regime in Tajikistan gives up in favor of an Islamic-nationalist coalition. The Uzbek communist regime remains in charge and uses the pretext of the change in Tajikistan to intervene (in order to "protect" the Uzbek minority, to control the waters, or to restore the former regime). The Russian army will not interfere. Dushambe will call on the only existing friendly army: Masoud's.

Afghanistan's neighbors are more conservative than imperialist in their attitude towards partition: they will not actively encourage a *de jure* partition, even if a *de facto* disintegration of Afghanistan is clearly the most probable outcome.

The Issue of Islam

Three, not necessarily antagonist, Islamic actors are active in Central Asia.

1. The "Official" Islamic Clergy. Created by Stalin in 1941, the "official" Islamic clergy has been a tool of Soviet foreign policy, mainly towards conservative Islamic countries like Jordan, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia, where Soviet *ulamas* were the only Soviets accepted. To be credible, the

official *ulamas* have high standards of theological education. Educated in Arab countries and fluent in Arabic, they acquired good knowledge of the Islamic *milieu* and good connections among Arab Muslim conservative circles.

The official clergy was superficially purged after 1988. The present spiritual pronouncements (*muftiyya*) are no longer tools in the hands of the governments. Respected by the population (except in Uzbekistan), the official *ulamas* are intermediaries between the ruling regimes and the Islamic opposition.

They push for the Islamicization of state law and everyday life, but avoid openly taking part in politics (although the Tajik Qazi made no mystery of his support for the candidate of the Islamo-nationalist coalition). They condemn ethnic antagonisms but have been unable to bypass the national political entities. *Muftiyyas* tend to coincide with the republics, and while they usually adhere closely to nationalist opinion, they have condemned the IRP, except in Tajikistan, where the Qazi, Turanzade, seems to be very close to the IRP.

Official mullahs are not numerous (a few dozen per republic) and are not present at the grass roots level. They have had to recognize and deal with the "parallel" clergy, which has spontaneously taken charge of the reopened local mosques. With a longer view in mind, the official clergy opened an "Islamic University" in Dushambe, with which it is trying to train mullahs to operate the local mosques. These efforts need financial support from Muslim countries, and the Saudis, Arab Muslim Brothers, Pakistanis, and Turks are competing with each other to subsidize new mosques and Islamic schools.

2. The Parallel Clergy. Alexandre Bennigsen wrote that during the whole Soviet period there was a numerous, popular, fundamentalist, parallel clergy which maintained religion among the population, mainly in rural areas and suburbs. This clergy is now in charge of the newly reopened mosques (generally about three per village). Superficially educated, the parallel clergy is not especially politically minded but is strongly traditionalist. It generally maintains ties with the local administration, with which they almost always have family ties. They are divided over their views of the "official clergy." Some reject it because of its collaborationism, but others would be quite happy to get salaries and subsidies from it.

3. Political Islam. The best example of political Islam is the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP), which was founded in June 1990 by Tatars and northern Caucasians. It rapidly took roots in Tajikistan and some parts of Uzbekistan (Fergana), but not in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan. The IRP is an All-Union Party, which explicitly opposes independence on the grounds that it will split the *umma*. It is also an Islamist party, influenced by the Muslim Brothers and Mawdudi ideology. It supports the Afghan mujahidin and Algerian FIS. It advocates an Islamic state and strongly opposes the ruling regimes and the official clergy (except in Tajikistan where the Qazi seems close to the IRP). More than just a movement, the IRP is a real political party. As such, it has been banned from taking part in elections in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, so it made an alliance with the secular democrats and nationalists. IRP recruits among the intelligentsia and some parallel mullahs.

The Islamic Connections

Foreign Muslim activists are thriving in Central Asia. They are mainly Saudis and Muslim Brothers who established a joint venture before the Gulf War, but diverged after it. One can also find *Jamaat al-Tabligh* delegations, which are not only conducting grass roots canvassing and preaching but also inviting local Muslims to undertake short term missionary trips abroad. More traditional institutions are also offering training for Central Asians: Al Azhar has decided to accept any Central Asian student in 1993 who applies.

Islamic literature, although expensive, is available everywhere. The themes of Middle East polemics and propaganda are spreading in Central Asia: opposition to Israel and Western military intervention in Saudi Arabia are favorite themes in mosque sermons. There is no clear cut distinction between the supposed moderate Islam conveyed by the Saudis and the more political Islam of the Muslim Brothers. Both are very anti-Western, trying to convince the people not to adopt secularism or turn toward the West, but to return to Islam, adopt Arabic script, and promote Islamicization (veil, segregation between girls and boys, etc.). In fact, although Saudi Arabia claims to act in order to prevent Iran's brand of Islam from spreading in Central Asia, its action has a more profound effect

than the Iranian one. It is turning Central Asian public opinion against the Western model of culture and development.

Towards a Compromise Between the Regional Powers

Curiously enough, all regional contenders are telling the West the same story. Each claims to be the best tool to stabilize central Asia against (your choice): 1) Iranian radicalism; 2) Turkish pan-Turkism; 3) Muslim Brothers fanaticism. Their primary aim, however, is to check the others. No regional power has the means to develop Central Asia and patronize it as did the colonial powers with their former colonies. None of these countries can afford to be embroiled in regional armed conflicts. There is thus a built-in limitation to the rivalries between them, even if the vocal propaganda is intense.

Competition occurs first on cultural grounds, and here the key question is the alphabet. On this issue, Turkey seems to have the upper hand against Iran and Saudi Arabia, except in Tajikistan. As far as

economics are concerned, natural constraints such as transportation and distance, and the dearth of goods and investments are such that the economic field is open to anyone.

Iran cannot be bypassed, and Turkey cannot be the sole godfather. Iran can provide communications lines and energy, while Turkey does not have enough economic strength to develop Central Asia. Despite Iranian acrimony, the only real bone of contention between Turkey and Iran is Azerbaijan. It is also the reason why the 15 February 1992 meeting in Tehran of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO: Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, joined by the four Central Asian Republics and Azerbaijan, but not by Afghanistan or Kazakhstan) led to an inevitable compromise and collaboration. It does mean that a new entity is on the way. The ECO is not the EEC, but it can be a tool of cooperation and stabilization.

In almost any scenario, Turkey is the winner because it has nothing to lose. However, if Turkey got caught up in the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, then it could lose its Western blessing for active involvement in Central Asia.

The Current Political and Economic Environment in Iran

Nikola B. Schahgaldian

Domestic Political Scene

Overview

With the coming to power of Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani as Iran's powerful executive president, especially after Iraq attempted to gobble up one time ally Kuwait on 2 August 1990, a combination of domestic and regional factors has effectively prompted Iran's new leadership to follow a more pragmatic and much less bellicose course of behavior. Since then, the record indicates that this new course will not substantively deviate from its basic direction of nonalignment and neutrality with regard to the major powers, including the United States.

Tehran will judge now and in the foreseeable future based on support for or opposition to Iran's political and geostrategic interests, especially in the Persian Gulf region. Before examining various aspects of the current Iranian situation, it is prudent to outline recent domestic political developments in that country, the underlying reasons for this new course of action, and the present status of the regime in Tehran.

Recent Political Developments

Originally, the foundations for a major change in Iran's political dispositions were laid in July 1988, when Iraq agreed to a ceasefire in its war against Iraq. The most far-reaching change, which went almost unnoticed in the West at the time, was that Ayatollah Khomeini was effectively eclipsed as the fountainhead of political decision-making in Iran. This had important implications for domestic balance of factional clerical forces within Iran itself.

This was particularly evident in the way in which the decision was taken to accept the ceasefire arrangements. He merely acquiesced in stopping armed hostilities, describing it as equivalent "to taking poison," rather than taking an active role in determining what the decision should be.¹

Indeed, Khomeini's role in Iranian policy matters measurably declined as a result of his acceptance of United Nations Resolution 598. This had important implications for the domestic balance of factional clerical forces within Iran itself, since his decline inevitably entailed the loss of any opportunity for significant political influence for the radical revolutionary "Line of the Imam" group and other extremists. This was so precisely because the radical political doctrines of these groups mirrored those of Khomeini himself.² They believed that the war against Iraq had to be continued until final victory and that only its successful conclusion would guarantee coming of the new Islamic era throughout the Islamic world.³ In contrast, the more centrist and pragmatist top leaders of Iran had by early 1987 already come to believe in the practical impossibility of Iraq's military defeat.

Their resolve was strengthened by the lack of any tangible success from yet another major Iranian offensive on the outskirts of Basra in the winter 1986-87.⁴ During this time, popular exhaustion with the war and its attendant privations also increased dramatically in Iran and began to affect the performance of conscripts at the front.⁵ The unexpected military reverses in the spring of 1988 caused further anxiety.

In the meantime, Iranian leaders perceived the growing American naval presence in the Persian Gulf as a serious threat, and apparently realized the country was neither militarily nor psychologically prepared for any military confrontation with the United States. Tehran's policy was to avoid clashes between its forces and American, although this was

not openly articulated.⁶ From the Iranian perspective, the United States naval presence in the Persian Gulf was nothing but a "plot" against Iran, providing Iraq with a shield behind which it could bomb with virtual impunity neutral ships trading with Iran.

Meanwhile, throughout the first half of 1988, Iraq escalated its use of chemical weapons and bombarded Tehran and other Iranian cities with hundreds of Soviet-made missiles. Under these circumstances, minor clashes started to occur between US naval forces and Iran's Revolutionary Guards stationed in the Persian Gulf. Following one of these clashes, on 3 July 1988, *USS Vincennes* mistook an Iranian civilian passenger plane for an attacking jet and downed it, killing all 290 persons on board.

The shootdown had major internal repercussions for Iran. The pragmatist camp became convinced that continuation of the war would thereafter pose a serious threat to the stability, even survival, of the clerical regime. Thus, the proponents of ending armed hostilities against Iraq, led both by Rafsanjani and Khomeini, seized upon the dramatic incident to argue the case for accepting Resolution 598.

Future developments were entirely unpredictable if American involvement in the area expanded, they argued, and eventually convinced Khomeini (who was apparently still not ready to concede) that a ceasefire was the best course to follow so that Iran could put aside the war and get moving again on its internal agenda.⁸

At the same time, however, the image of Imam as a leader who dominated the political process in Iran remained intact for a while longer. But the simple fact that Khomeini no longer reigned as the undisputed source of power within the ruling clerical establishment created a noticeable measure of uncertainty among Iranian clerics in the second half of 1988.

This sense of uncertainty was also strengthened by the knowledge that Khomeini could not live much longer, and his demise would remove the one person who acted as pivot and focus of popular support for the Islamic regime. Nonetheless, the transition from a regime dominated by Khomeini and his more radical followers in the government to a new order symbolized by the ascendance of Rafsanjani's political fortunes, was achieved without massive domestic upheavals.

Emergence of New Leadership

As stated earlier, the events of July 1988 opened a new chapter for Iran's top clerical rulers. Ever since the establishment of Islamic government in 1979, Khomeini and associates had been reacting to real and imagined internal and foreign enemies. In the post-war period, however, they came to face the problems and challenges of postwar reconstruction. Among many other developments, this change alone strongly affected the support bases of the more radical factions within the clerical establishment. For example, the Musavi government and its allies were no longer able to exploit the war with Iraq to justify their Islamic doctrinaire social policies and austere economic measures.⁹ Consequently, the formal governmental apparatus which had been the focus of power and a stronghold of the extremist factions found itself almost unable to manage the economy.

Indeed, during the year following the cessation of military hostilities with Iraq, the reaction of large sectors of Iran's population to the government came rapidly to depend directly on its capability to fulfill its long-promised goals of social and economic reforms. However, realization of such goals posed many difficulties. For one, where anti-government dissent and conservative opposition were often suppressed by brute force, such tools were largely useless for the extremists in the management of economic affairs. Instead, reforms of this nature, as many Iranian leaders advocated at the time, called for rationality, specialization, compromise, and pragmatism.¹⁰

But these were not the sorts of values to which the extremist camp was particularly attached. This and many similar problems led to a series of divisive debates and disagreements within the extremist camp throughout 1988 and in the first half of 1989. Thus, the new political and military circumstances became especially favorable to the clerical politicians belonging to the pragmatist camp; in turn, the latter became more outspoken, visible, and assertive in policy matters.

In the period under review, the regime was also forced by the pragmatists to relax or abandon many of its severe social and cultural measures.¹¹ At the same time, attempts were made to encourage some Iranian exiles who had opposed the regime to return home. More important, there was an effort to trim

the wings of the hard-line Revolutionary Guard commanders in favor of the professional military.¹²

Pragmatism Consolidated

Ayatollah Khomeini died on 3 June 1989, 11 days after entering a hospital for abdominal surgery. Although the Imam's death left many ordinary Iranians stunned and uncertain about their future and that of their country, it did not catch the Islamic authorities unprepared.¹³ Ever since Khomeini came to power, his would-be successors had always been concerned about who among them would rule after him. Indeed, only hours after the old man's death, the Council of Experts, empowered by the republic's constitution to choose the next leader, convened and heard Khomeini's last "political statement." To the surprise of many, his will contained no mention of any personal choice for his successor.¹⁴ Despite this difficulty, the Council named President Khamenei as the new spiritual leader of Iran by a two-thirds majority.¹⁵

Khamenei's smooth election demonstrated a striking feature of Islamic Iran: the rapidity and success with which the clerical establishment could consolidate its power and institutionalize its rule. As such, the event was a positive test of the regime's constitutional arrangements. The transition to a new government was, however, not completed before 28 July 1989, when Rafsanjani won the country's presidential elections virtually unopposed. Simultaneous with this election, the Islamic constitution was amended by a referendum which reframed the president's power, putting him in effective charge of the executive. Similarly, the office of prime minister and its subordinate apparatus, in charge of various economic and administrative functions, were abolished altogether and their prerogatives passed to the president.¹⁶

There was little doubt among Iranian political circles that these amendments signified the centralization of political decision-making in the hands of Rafsanjani and the creation of an eventual rubber-stamp parliament. Indeed, the newly elected president won a major triumph and cemented his political authority on 28 August 1991, when the parliament approved his entire list for the first new cabinet since the death of Khomeini. The parliament's endorsement of Rafsanjani's choice of ministers was in reality an effective mandate for the

Iranian leader to pursue his pragmatist policies. This was demonstrated vividly because at least 12 out of the 22 new cabinet members were well-known moderate pragmatists, educated in the United States.¹⁷ At the same time, the move represented a victory for Rafsanjani in his efforts to purge the former Interior Minister Ali Akbar Mohtashami, a vociferous opponent of any opening toward the West, from the new government.

Since then, the pragmatists on the whole have succeeded in gradually developing their internal political position through carefully constructed alliances with other religious and political leaders. For example, Rafsanjani has strengthened his ties with some economically conservative and centrist power centers and has reinforced his long-established support bases among the Bazari merchants and government workers.¹⁸ Similarly, Rafsanjani has apparently secured the close cooperation of Ali Khamenei, who has considerably mellowed his originally hard-line positions on various domestic and foreign issues. Since early 1990, the two men have often worked as a team. Rafsanjani has also succeeded in drawing into his ambit Ayatollah Khomeini's only surviving son, Ahmad, who since the demise of his father had become a popular leader among many centrist and less extremist hard-line factions. These undertakings, considered serious blows to the anti-Rafsanjani forces, reached a high point in May 1990 when Ahmad came out firmly in support of the president's policies and ridiculed many of the positions of the radicals.¹⁹

Internal Balance of Forces

Even though the more pragmatist forces have gradually consolidated their positions since the summer of 1989, they have often been hampered in controlling the political process in Iran. As a result, the Rafsanjani government has faced considerable difficulty in resolving urgent domestic and foreign problems. These include reining in the rampant inflation which Tehran says is at an annual rate of about 30 percent, although independent economists say it is several times higher; eliminating severe shortages of essential food and consumer goods created largely by the war and nationalization of the private sector economy; and reconstruction of the war-shattered economy. The urgency has been

highlighted, however, by the growing popular realization in Tehran that the gap between the resources Iran commands and what it needs is so wide that it cannot be bridged without foreign assistance.

In the meantime, hard-liners have continued to publicly contest and often slow down many of the government's reform measures. This is facilitated somewhat by the fact that Rafsanjani must contend with an influential minority of as many as 130 hard-liners in Iran's 270-member parliament, which still asserts considerable influence over executive policy. The hard-liners in parliament and the newspapers they control, like *Keyhan* and *Ahrar*, have criticized what many describe as "Hashemi's perestroika." This includes Rafsanjani's advocacy of communism, his often stated preference for private enterprise over state-owned management of the economy, his view that it is time for Iran to normalize its ties with the West, and his emphasis on the work ethic over ideology.²⁰

Although clerical rivalries have continued to disrupt Iran's internal situation, it is possible to discern a more or less consistent trend in the internal balance of forces. It should be stated at the outset that if the pragmatists headed by Rafsanjani fail to hold on to power, the prospects for a balanced and enlightened political system would be poor. As mentioned earlier, the most likely contenders for power within the clerical establishment are currently the two extremes of Islamic revolutionary and hard-liners on the left, and the conservatives on the right.

In fact, the experience of the past few years has shown that the latter, themselves weakened considerably during Khomeini's post-1986 policies, are pleased in most cases to throw in their lot with Rafsanjani.²¹ Therefore, the opposition to the current government tends to come from the hard-liners. Throughout the past year, they seem to be frustrated by Rafsanjani's further trimming of revolutionary practices.²² In particular, the radical hard-liners want a strongly centralized and government controlled economic system, which Rafsanjani does not endorse. They also seek various radical and egalitarian social policies, demands which the Council of Guardians, a body which has to ensure that all laws passed are in conformity with Islamic law, has consistently rejected.²³

Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that the

stands of the hard-liners are, in general, well thought out and are intellectually and ideologically attractive to many Iranians. However, their growing weakness at the institutional level and insulation from crucial organs of political decision-making have significantly reduced the threat they can pose to the current leadership.²⁴ At any case, the hard-liners presently appear to lack military backing and are strong only among some semi-governmental organizations such as the *Jehade Sazandegi* (the Construction Brigades) and some neighborhood revolutionary *Komitehs*, especially in slum areas of Tehran and other major cities. Furthermore, they have also been discredited by the more extreme activities of some of their leaders like Ayatollah Mohammed Khomeini.²⁵ In fact, short of an unlikely alliance with the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) or engaging in an equally unlikely guerilla movement, they seem to have no means of seizing power.

As for the remainder of other opposition forces, the outlook seems to be even more bleak. The secularist leftist forces, *Fedayeen* and *Tudeh* (Communist), have been virtually obliterated inside Iran since the mid-1980s and have little coherent support outside.²⁶ Similarly, royalist and liberal moderate groupings have little influence, with only the Freedom Movement of former prime minister Mehdi Bazargan experiencing a tenuous existence inside Iran.²⁷ As for the originally Marxist and Islamic *Mojahedin-e Khalq*, the wave of executions just after the ceasefire directed against them has effectively disrupted their operations inside Iran. Moreover, their political constituency has dwindled drastically because of that organization's active support of the Iraqis during the war. At present, the *Mojahedin* survive as a politically inconsequential group outside Iran.²⁸

Short-Term Regime Prospects

The many factors that affect political developments in Iran are complex, and the interaction between them is also extremely complicated. Nevertheless, certain underlying factors stand out more or less clearly. To begin with, although the Rafsanjani government continues to keep the economy ticking, it has been thus far unable to bring about the needed socio-economic improvements. The problems unleashed by inflation

and the presence of many millions of unemployed people and war-stricken internal refugees remain largely unsolved.²⁹ In part because of these developments, the social and economic situation has become even more unsettled than a few years ago. However, such setbacks are unlikely to push the Rafsanjani government to the brink of collapse. Many factors will prevent such an outcome in the foreseeable future. These include the following.

First, it is true that Rafsanjani needs time to further consolidate himself, but one thing is very clear: if he cannot do it, nothing else will work in Tehran. Fortunately for the pragmatists, the Iranian president seems to have a firmer grip on political power now than last year or a few months ago. He is likely to continue remaining on top of the Iranian political pyramid, thus ensuring the regime's existence. However, as long as the Rafsanjani (and Khamenei) camp is in effective power, the government is likely to continue to demoralize, subdue, and crush resistance from all anti-government elements. The regime can also digest and neutralize oppositional political activity coming from the hard-liners.

Secondly, splits within the leadership and factional rivalries among them do not seem likely to get enough out of hand to give the outsiders (clerical, secular, or leftist) an opportunity to compete for power. Moreover, although the clerical leadership remains far from being a united or monolithic political entity, most of its members share enough social and political views to give them considerable internal strength and cohesion. This solidarity is reinforced by the common experience and struggle of key leaders against their clerical and secularist opponents. Similarly, factional infighting between the pragmatists and the hard-liners will necessarily be tempered by the knowledge that uncontrolled internecine struggle will eventually lead to collapse of the Islamic rule altogether. If it does, it is impossible to know how events will then fall out. In the foreseeable future, however, overarching common interests among clerics are most likely to prevent such an outcome.

Finally, the present government seems to be in firm control of its armed forces. The core commanders of the Revolutionary Guards, politically the most potent element in the armed forces, continue to be faithful to the ideals of the regime and are personally loyal to either Rafsanjani, Khamenei, or both.³⁰ The

same holds true for most men in the professional military; those officers who may secretly still entertain thoughts of opposition to the current government are effectively prevented from taking any steps in this direction.³¹ There is no reason to think that this pattern of civil-military relations will undergo any noticeable change in the foreseeable future.

The implications of the foregoing examination are obvious: the present leadership in Iran is in strong position, at least by Middle Eastern standards. It has firm control of its armed forces and is able to mobilize significant sections of the population. It faces no major opposition forces and has already weathered the important test of institutionalization. Nevertheless, it is marked by factionalism, but to date, this factionalism has rarely gone beyond what is politically acceptable in contemporary Iran. At the same time, factional discords have allowed a degree of public debate and electoral uncertainty rare in any post-revolutionary state in the Third World. At any rate, the internal Iranian situation will not be further clarified before the parliamentary elections scheduled for 10 April 1992.

Building on Economic Stalemate

In the past few years, Iran has turned its attention to the enormous task of reconstruction. The Rafsanjani government's success in this effort will be an important determinant in the balance of internal political forces; it will also determine whether and in what form the entire clerical rule survives. As such, this task will constitute one of the basic underlying factors in Iran's future foreign behavior as well. Thus, in many respects this challenge is perhaps far more formidable than the armed struggle against Iraq.

It must be recognized that Iran's economic reconstruction does not simply mean the repair of damages caused by the Iran-Iraq War but refers directly to the entire range of the regime's socio-economic policies and the long-promised measures to satisfy popular aspirations. These were the very issues that originally helped to mobilize mass support for the revolution of 1979.³² For eight years, however, the war with Iraq served to justify the failure to initiate the complexities of the reconstruction process. It is useful to review the impact of the war first.

The War Toll

Iraq invaded Iran on 22 September 1980 along an 850-mile front, penetrating up to 60 miles into the country's western and southwestern regions. This war zone included the oil-rich Khuzestan province that was home to Iran's major economic installations such as port and oil facilities, and petrochemical and steel industries. When the war began, some seven million people who lived in this zone quickly became the war's first casualties. Estimates of the human toll, however, are at best informed guesses. According to the government estimates, approximately 125,000 professional and other regular military personnel died in the war, but the number of killed Revolutionary Guardsmen and members of the *Basij* (the Paramilitary Mobilization Army) has yet to be disclosed. This is variously estimated at between 250,000 and 300,000.³³ Moreover, 61,000 are still missing in action, and about 20,000 reportedly remain in Iraqi prisons. The number of Iranians maimed in the war is estimated at varying from 400,000 to 700,000, and at least one-half of the wounded are believed to be permanently disabled.³⁴ To this human toll must be added some 20,000 to 35,000 civilians, killed mostly by Iraqi missile attacks on urban areas. Moreover, approximately 2.5 million Iranians became homeless, most during 1980-1982, when Iraq devastated much of Khuzestan province. Large numbers of these internal refugees are still sheltered in various refugee camps, makeshift shacks, and other temporary places in major urban centers.³⁵

Equally devastating has been the impact of the war on Iraq's urban settlements. A total of 52 cities have been damaged. Of these, six cities have been completely leveled, and another 15 have sustained up to 80 percent destruction. These included Khorramshahr (pre-war population 300,000), Iran's largest and most important harbor, and Abadan (pre-war population 350,000) which had one of the largest oil refineries in the world. Both of those seaports are still ghost towns.³⁶ Iraq also struck numerous civilian and industrial targets more than 350 miles from the border, reaching as far north as Rasht on the Caspian Sea. Tehran itself became the target of intense missile attacks in the spring of 1988; over 200 missiles fell on the capital at this time, prompting as many as three million residents to temporarily abandon the city.³⁷ Destruction of

rural areas, mostly in the densely populated southwestern regions, have been even more devastating. About one-third of Iranian villages in the war zone (some 4,000 in number) alone were completely destroyed and many more elsewhere sustained heavy damage. The most educated estimate of monetary damage inflicted in the course of the war to human settlements amounts to some \$20 billion.

Yet, the war inflicted the most serious blow to the country's economy. Total damage to the economy is estimated to amount to \$592 billion, of which \$210 billion relates to damages laid on Iran's infrastructure. Financial losses were equally staggering. For example, total war expenditures amounted to approximately \$55 billion, the bulk of which was spent on weaponry.³⁸ Thus, the impact of the war, especially on Iran's industrial and agricultural fields, came to produce long-lasting dislocations in the country's economy, adding to its already chronically distorted nature.

Present Economic Status

For the past 15 years, the dominant characteristic of Iran's economy has been reliance on oil income and high levels of military expenditures. The most profound economic influence on pre-revolutionary Iran was the 1973 OPEC oil price hike. Earlier, Iran's oil income was used to fund social and economic development and as a feedback in rapidly expanding domestic petrochemical and steel industries. This phase ended in early 1973 when planning was dropped and oil allowed to overwhelm all other activities. The government's grandiose development projects, huge outlays on weaponry, and consumer imports soon threw the economy into disarray. The sudden reversal of this trend after 1976 led to disillusion, chaos, and political rebellion; these, in addition to other factors, paved the way for the victory of the Islamic revolution in 1979.³⁹

Inevitably, however, the revolution created further social and economic uncertainty: large numbers of Western-educated and trained professional and middle-class entrepreneurs left the country, destroying decades of investment in human resources.⁴⁰ Economic priorities of the old regime were cast aside, its developmental projects abandoned, and notions of an Islamic economy were introduced. In practice, however, political and

religious considerations displaced rational interest in economic factors, and this amplified the disruptions already caused by the revolution. The economy sank into a new type of oil dependency buoyed up by a further rise in the price of oil in mid-1979.

Iran's economic well-being was again threatened when Iraqi troops invaded the country in September 1980. At first, oil revenues were large enough to fund both the war and the imports, mostly foodstuffs, needed to compensate the reduced level of economic activity after the revolution. As long as the war could be handled in this way, the population was prepared to accept the declining economic performance as the necessary sacrifice for "the struggle of Islam against world arrogance." Disaster came, however, in the form of the collapse in oil prices in 1986. Meanwhile, the clerical regime, which had from the very beginning of its rule called for eliminating national dependence on external markets including the international oil market, found that events had taken it on a course diametrically opposed to its chosen path. In the run up to the 1986 crash in prices, Iran was an oil-based economy more than ever before. In addition, disinvestment in the industries in the period 1979-1985, and a sustained loss of labor and capital from agriculture had severely reduced the capacity and productivity of domestic supply over so long a period that any credible resuscitation was quite beyond the regime capability. The economic inheritance of the state in the second half of the 1980s was, therefore, extremely poor.⁴¹

Indeed, the clerical regime experienced great difficulties in coming to terms with the fall in oil income in the post-1986 period. Since oil revenues accounted for over 95 percent of all exports, the diminishing income from oil exports had a pervading impact throughout the economy. For example, despite government propaganda on the theme of self-sufficiency, Iran has come to depend on imports to maintain domestic output, even at the low levels which prevailed in the early post-revolutionary years. Thus, in 1988, more than half of industrial production relied directly on imported raw materials and components, and more than a third of all food commodities was imported.⁴²

As for Iran's balance of payments situation, it has rarely been sound since the revolution, showing persistent deficits. In the wake of the revolution, this

was not too serious, as the country had fairly large foreign exchange reserves. Since that time, however, the position has deteriorated steadily, and would have been far worse had not the government increasingly run down Iran's less visible foreign assets. Thus, in mid-1991, disposable liquid foreign exchange assets reportedly amounted to little more than \$4 billion. In contrast, this figure stood at \$7.5 billion in 1985 and over \$10 billion in 1980.⁴³

As noted earlier, Iran's economic performance is weakened also by high inflation and subsidies. Ever since the revolution, the government has attempted to play down the effects of inflation. A large chunk of government income is regularly spent on price subsidies, and a multi-tiered set of price control mechanisms used to achieve this objective. However, food and consumer shortages have led to the emergence of widespread free or black markets. This situation has, in turn, added fuel to growing dissatisfaction.

Finally, Iran's economic problems are also compounded by many accumulated social and demographic problems. For example, the sheer size of the Iranian population brings its own difficulties, especially since its growth rate is one of the highest in the world.⁴⁴ Thus, feeding the population is a major government preoccupation.⁴⁵ Generating employment is also a major problem, since more than 60 percent of the population is under 20 years of age, and upwards of 600,000 people join the work force each year.

Conflicting Reconstruction Approaches

In view of the magnitude of socio-economic problems facing Iran, reconstruction priorities have become the subject of sharp political disagreements since the ceasefire. Technically, the debate is centered around five basic issues: rebuilding Iran's military machine; increasing economic production; social welfare for the poorer classes; and rehabilitating the war-damaged areas. However, the real clash has been over the respective roles of the government and the private sector in rebuilding the country. The question, then, is whether Iran should reconstruct society through an open-door policy or by following a strategy of self-reliance with extensive state involvement.⁴⁶ In many respects, the clash is in fact a continuation of ideological struggle waged between the conservative-pragmatist

alliance and their more hard-line opponents, a struggle that has divided the clerical establishment since the earliest days of the Islamic Republic.

Open door advocates, including more senior clergy, bazaar businessmen, and middle-class professionals, argue that the policy of excessive self-reliance has harmed the economy and that it is high time for the country to move quickly because needs are so great. They insist that the people have sacrificed enough and will not wait much longer to see their lives improve. The government, they plead, should take serious steps to encourage the private sector to produce and import consumer and industrial goods, and itself do the same. This will require liberalizing foreign trade policies. Investments in projects directed toward the immediate welfare of the population should also receive priority over grandiose developmental projects. The open door advocates, however, realize that their economic prescriptions may require the use of foreign resources and expertise. But they maintain that unless the economic pie is made bigger by a strategy of rapid growth, there will be little to share with those below the poverty line, currently about 65 percent of the population.⁴⁷

Others, mostly socio-economic egalitarians and their non-clerical radical allies, argue that the pace should be slower and that people who have lived in extreme hardship for 10 years will not mind waiting a while longer to see improvements. Thus, they advocate long-term investment in cement, steel, construction, and machine tools industries (all materials needed for reconstruction). This approach, they maintain, needs little foreign exchange, and in turn will leave enough resources for the revitalization of the agriculture and small-scale industries. The proponents of this line also argue strongly for the further expansion and development of the state production and distribution functions. Otherwise, they argue, the country will soon become indebted to foreign governments and companies, which will result in foreign dependency and income inequality.⁴⁸

As a whole, the hard-liners' views had been supported by and reflected strongly in the policies of the government of Hussein Musavi who was the prime minister from 1981 until he was forced to resign in the middle of 1989.⁴⁹ Similarly, Khomeini, who had for years steered a more or less middle course in political matters among rival clerical

factions, also tilted strongly toward hard-line economic views.⁵⁰ As for Khamanei, he has used his influence to moderate contentious positions of rival groups and diminish criticisms of the Rafsanjani government. In contrast with the above, the Rafsanjani administration, especially since early 1990, has leaned strongly toward a mixed economic performance in which the private sector would play a major role. This strategy incorporates a planning framework to bring together public, private, and cooperative sectors. But the sector most favored consists of privately organized cooperatives which have been officially encouraged to activate a balanced economic growth.⁵¹

Present Economic Priorities

Since coming to power, the present government has introduced an economic reconstruction plan which is considerably different from the approach practiced under Khomeini. The new policy which reflects the change in the internal balance of forces in post-war Iran is predicated upon a non-confrontational foreign policy which seeks to export the Islamic revolution by creating an emulative model rather than by force. The policy also aims to create more open relationships between Iran and foreign countries, both in the East and the West. At the same time, it plans on receiving foreign assistance. Internally, the government advocates a strategy of favoring a degree of political openness and a more positive attitude toward educated Iranian exiles living outside the country. The government plan, which was debated, revised, and amended for several months, passed through parliament in the early summer of 1990, when it ratified the "First Republic." In practice, the move legitimized the position of the moderates and the pragmatists and removed the legal entanglements ahead of the Rafsanjani government in pursuing its economic and foreign policies.⁵²

In view of the practical consequences of the emergence of a new coalition of interests in post-war Iran and its likely impact on that country's foreign relations, it may be appropriate to briefly review specific government objectives, policies, and priorities. While it is still premature to draw firm conclusions from these policies, there is reason to assert that as time goes on, these policy preferences would be implemented with more ease than before.

A major priority of Iran in the early 1990s which all parties, despite their differences, agreed upon is the need to reconstruct and reequip the armed forces. As is well known, equipment quality and quantity has been seriously undermined in all military sectors. It seems that Iran's expenditures in the coming few years are likely to be at least \$2 to \$3 billion annually. While the present government is committed to promoting domestic defense industries, it will need to enter into major contracts with foreign industrialized states to remedy this situation. As of this writing, the government has not publicly spelled out its preference of any particular country. However, the Rafsanjani government is expected to strike out a well-balanced approach in this area. Any substantial deviation from this approach will adversely affect the present government's position and weaken it considerably.

The revitalization of the private sector has been well underway for the past two years. Thus far, small-scale industries, agricultural and service-oriented enterprises, together with traditional bazaar merchants, have been the primary beneficiaries. With the government's encouragement, this sector has placed over \$2 billion worth of consumer and food imports in the past few months alone.⁵³ Most of these imports come traditionally from Western European countries. This alleviates domestic shortages and further strengthens the business climate. The government remains committed to its policies in this field; it also hopes the private sector will soon acquire a considerable say in larger project tendering activities with foreign firms in many areas. This will inevitably strengthen Iran's economic ties, especially with Western Europe. Nevertheless, the government retains control over industries (petrochemical, oil, defense, utilities), and the bulk of national investment is controlled by official entities rather than by the private sector. This could also be a good reason for cooperation between foreign concerns and Iranian partners. An improved access for foreign participation in state projects has been noticeable in the past year. This tendency is likely to be continued, as long as the present government remains in power. Judging from contracts awarded thus far, Western countries with large contracting industries (West Germany, Italy, Japan, and South Korea) seem to be the important beneficiaries.⁵⁴

The rehabilitation of Iran's oil export capacity is currently deemed to be at least as important as the rearmament program. Despite its occasional rhetoric, especially for domestic consumption, the Rafsanjani government fully understands that Iran relies very heavily on oil income and that without increased oil revenue, it will become vulnerable. Indeed, in a remarkable reversal for the clerical regime, it revealed in April 1990 that it was negotiating with Western oil companies about putting their capital once again into Iran's oil and gas fields. The new plan, outlined by Oil Minister Gholam Reza Aghazadeh, was stunning in the sense that it meant the government was scrapping yet another building block in its ideological house.⁵⁵

In any case, the government's basic priority has been to rebuild and repair Iran's major oil terminals, particularly those at Kharg Island, together with their pipelines and pumping stations. Additional work is scheduled to start soon on oil refineries at Tehran, Esfahan, Tabriz, and Shiraz, all favorite targets of the Iraqi Air Force during the war. If the involvement of Western oil companies in Iran's oil industry becomes a reality, it will have but a favorable impact on long-term Iranian foreign policies with the West.

At the same time, the government is committed to replacing oil with gas at home for both domestic and industrial users. This is dictated by the constraints on internal oil consumption imposed by the war damage in general and the current need to refine Iran's oil abroad. This policy, if implemented, would act to free more oil for exporting purposes.⁵⁶

Prompted by this and many other factors, the government reached an agreement on resumption of up to three billion cubic meters of Iranian gas supplies to the USSR in January 1989.⁵⁷ This had been halted by Iran in 1980. In turn, this paved the way for the conclusion of a 10-year economic agreement with the Soviet Union in late June 1990 involving at least \$15 billion worth of projects.⁵⁸ Since then, economic ties between the two countries have improved noticeably, hand-in-hand with a thawing of previously frosty political relations.

Despite the government's official policy of using domestic resource to its maximum capacity in order to avoid foreign dependency, there are indications that it will increasingly seek access to loan financing. Iran prefers loans from international agencies such as the World Bank and the IMF rather

than from commercial banks and governments. It also realizes that the gap between an enormous demand for foreign exchange resources and its limited possibilities of revenue generation can only be filled by foreign borrowing.

Indeed, following long debates within the leadership, several high ranking regime officials have revealed that as early as late 1989, the government was planning to raise \$3 billion in foreign loans in the next few years to set up "revenue-producing projects."⁵⁹ Initially, such funding was disguised as interest-free credit or created informally through the rescheduling of payments.⁶⁰ Once the initial stage was over, however, fairly large scale foreign borrowing followed. In view of the fact that Iran has maintained good credit and its record of debt payments is largely unblemished, the international financial community is likely to be rather benevolent in this respect. The Rafsanjani government's financial policies, if and when placed into high gear, will almost certainly further stabilize Iran's ties with the West and improve them considerably. Nevertheless, it must be reiterated that whatever the outcome of this and similar governmental policies, in the short run, the rate and the extent of its entire reconstruction plan will necessarily depend on the level of international oil prices.

Obstacle to Recovery

Aside from limited developmental funds and a shortage of foreign exchange reserves, there are many other major obstacles to Rafsanjani's reformist plans. First, there is a severe shortage of college graduates and technicians. Available statistics for 1986-1987, the last year for which figures are available, show that there were only 542,000 specialists in the country. This means the ration of the qualified manpower to the total population is desperately low, over 20 times lower than the comparative ration for countries like the former USSR or the Netherlands. The figure for technicians is even more disappointing: six per 1,000 population (compared to 250 in Japan). The quality of higher education has declined drastically during the past decade, and this sector has never recovered from the damage inflicted during the so-called Islamic cultural revolution, when the universities were closed for five years. The mass

exodus of scientists, instructors, and other specialists has had the same impact. Even more disturbing is the fact that large numbers of those available remain unemployed.⁶¹ Faced with this situation, the post-war government has resumed sending a large number of students to various universities around the world, including many on scholarships to the United States; it has also devised a program to entice Iranian specialists currently living in the United States and Western Europe.⁶² Such efforts, however, continue to arouse strong opposition among the hard-liners and radicals who detest foreign, especially Western-educated, Iranians. Nevertheless, the need for specialists and a technically qualified work force is so great that the government is obliged to fill the gap by utilizing foreign expertise. In this respect, the government will have little choice for many years to come.⁶³

Another important obstacle often overlooked is the peculiar governmental-bureaucratic environment within which all policy questions have to be settled. For example, it should be remembered that in the Islamic Republic, both before and after Khomeini's death, no single ministry or state organ had been charged with carrying out any political, ideological, socio-economic, or foreign policy task considered important enough by the ruling Iranian clerics. Instead, many agencies with parallel and often overlapping responsibilities and functions, perform these tasks. Indeed, an uncommonly large number of organizations, all led by clerical politicians, are caught up in a fierce competition of money and specific missions.⁶⁴

Moreover, these state structures in which many thousands of lower level clergymen and civilian bureaucrats serve in various capacities are still far from being fully institutionalized. There is still a fairly rapid turnover and reshifting of personnel, including those in the ministry of foreign affairs; and line of duty, jurisdictions, and organizational responsibilities between and within them are still undergoing changes of all kinds. Finally, the strength and practical day-to-day influence of many responsible clerical officials who head the governmental ministries or quasi-revolutionary structures often do not directly correspond to their positions. There is reason to assert that these inter-related aspects of Iranian governmental environment have become even more pronounced in the past two years.

This situation is hardly conducive to development of stable patterns of institutionalized internal relations within the Iranian government. This type of almost constant fluidity has several other implications. For one, it points to a huge gap that has developed between the local and personal concerns of many middle level clerical politicians, and the economic, national, and international issues with which the top clerics are mainly concerned. Moreover, since policy issues in Iran still tend to be defined and justified in broad religious terms, the failure to coordinate matters of leadership and administration is likely to affect control in matters of economic reform and related foreign issues as well.

The Rafsanjani government faces many other equally important problems. For example, it must decide whether there are limits to wealth accumulation and private ownership. Otherwise, private cash holdings will fail to contribute to the reconstruction efforts; instead, most of it would leave the country. The government must also decide whether foreign trade will be nationalized as demanded by the constitution, and if not, what its specific role in the recently more liberalized trade policy is going to be. As of this writing, these issues are hardly near resolution.

Finally, the government is hard pressed to make quick decisions about such important pending reforms as tax and land reform, income distribution, women's rights, social justice, and political democracy. These remain among the most formidable problems facing the present government. Some of these issues have been taken up in recent years and some progress has been achieved. In the post-war period, the government has also taken steps toward legalizing many political groups sympathetic to the Islamic political system.⁶⁵ The previously harsh enforcement of the Islamic dress codes and restraints on a number of social and cultural activities have also been relaxed noticeably. But much more in this area still needs to be done. It is clear that those who do not feel secure politically and economically can hardly contribute to the development of their society. In other words, the present government's economic reconstruction policies must go hand-in-hand with tackling problems of social justice and political democracy before they can become successful. The fact that these issues have eventually been placed on the top

of the government's agenda in the post-war period is, by itself, the most encouraging development. As such, they are bound to have a moderating effect on Iran's overall behavior as well.

Endnotes

1. At the time, both Rafsanjani and Seyyed Ali Khamenei, then Iran's president, were widely credited with persuading Khomeini to accept the ceasefire with Iraq. Khomeini's pronouncements on this issue appeared in *Resalat* (in Persian), 18 and 19 August 1988; also see *Iran Times*, 25 August 1988.

2. See Shireen Hunter, "After the Ayatollah," *Foreign Policy*, no. 66 (Spring 1987): 77-98.

3. For a summary of positions of the extremist camp on various domestic Iranian issues and foreign policy matters, consult Nikola B. Shahgaldian, *The Clerical Establishment in Iran* (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, 1989), 52-57.

4. For a comprehensive study of the Iran-Iraq War, consult Shahram Chubin and Charles Tripp, *Iran and Iraq at War* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988).

5. Various press reports to this effect also appeared in major US newspapers at this time. See for example, *New York Times*, 12 February 1986; *Washington Post*, 18 January 1986; *Los Angeles Times*, 24 February 1986.

6. For Khomeini's policy statements on this issue, see *Jomhuriyeh Eslami* (in Persian), 16 May 1988; Rafsanjani's remarks appear in *Iran Times*, 28 April 1988, 2-3.

7. See *New York Times*, 4 and 8 July 1988.

8. This was first pointed out by Gary Sick, "Slouching Toward Settlement: The Internationalization of the Iran-Iraq War, 1987-1988," (unpublished paper, 1988). Also see James Weinrauch, "Iran's Response to UN Resolution 598," *American-Arab Affairs*, no. 31 (Winter 1989-1990): 15-28.

9. The disarray among the extremists reached a high point in early September 1988 when the Iranian premier, Mir Hussein Musavi was forced to resign. Only after Khomeini's intervention did he continue to hold his position. See *Iran Times*, 9 September 1988, 1 and 14.

10. The ideas of some reformist Iranian leaders were regularly highlighted in the pages of the conservative daily mouthpiece *Resalat* in Tehran. For example, see the issues of 12-16 November 1988 and 21-28 March 1989.

11. See *New York Times*, 25 September 1988; 17 January 1989; 12 May 1990; and 21 August 1991.

12. There is little doubt that these policies were advocated by Hashemi Rafsanjani and his close associates who were put in charge of implementing the new measures. It should be remembered that Rafsanjani had by June 1988 also succeeded in becoming Acting Commander-in-Chief of Iran's armed forces.

13. Long before Khomeini's death, the ruling clerics had reportedly prepared elaborate security measures to prevent any possible disturbances by the regime's opponents when the death occurred. For example, an emergency plan that was to be activated when the Imam died was given a trial run in Tehran in early February 1985. The measures included closing Tehran's major airports and positioning specially trained units on all approaches to the capital. Other armed units were also dispatched to take over major thoroughfares and government ministries in the capital, ostensibly to discourage any possible lawlessness. For

details, see Amir Taheri, *The Spirit of Allah: Khomeini and the Islamic Revolution* (Bethesda, MD: Adler & Adler Publishers, Inc., 1986), 296; also *Keyhan* (London), no. 76, 12 December 1985, 23.

14. The complete text of Khomeini's will appeared later in all major Iran newspapers, including *Keyhan Havai*, no. 8321, 14 June 1989. For English excerpts, see *New York Times*, 9 June 1989.

15. For a profile of Khamenei and his political beliefs, see Iran Research Group, *Iran Yearbook 89/90* (Bonn: M.B. Medien & Bucher, Verlagsgesellschaft, 1989), Section 9, 12-14. Also see Schahgaldian, 1989, 53-55.

16. For details, consult *Iran Focus* 2, Nos. 5-8 (May-August 1989).

17. See *New York Times*, 30 August 1989; also *Middle East Economic Digest*, 30 September 1989.

18. This is indicated by the growing visibility and public prominence of many conservative politicians who have been appointed to many administrative as well as diplomatic positions in the past 12 months. For a complete list of these appointees, consult *Iran Focus* 2, Nos. 1-5 (January-May 1990). Also see Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *FBIS Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 24 February and 18 May 1990.

19. In two major speeches in early May 1990 before gatherings of Islamic Revolution Housing Foundation and Interior Ministry officials, Khomeini's son lauded flexibility, dismissed "hot revolutionaries," and portrayed his father's "Neither-East-nor-West" policy as a nuanced principle that must not be followed slavishly. At the same time, he endorsed Rafsanjani's goal of economic liberalization and boosting output, contrary to the avowed position of the radicals, saying, "Production is the answer." For details, see *Resalat*, 18 May 1990; also *Iran Times*, 25 May 1990, 1-2 and 14.

20. The issue of work ethic, in particular, has repeatedly caused drawn-out ideological conflicts throughout the past year. During this time, Rafsanjani and his supporters have repeatedly called on Iranians to rid themselves of the notion that poor is beautiful. He has argued that Iran's poor men can never be free, remaining forever subject to humiliation and exploitation by other states. Such views, as the radicals have pointed out publicly, are obviously at odds with the tenets upon which Khomeini built his revolutionary model of power of the dispossessed, strongly emphasizing the happiness and rewards of an afterlife. For Rafsanjani's views on this point, see, for example, his Friday speech of 29 September 1989, *Kayhan* (in Persian), 30 September 1989, 1-2.

As for the makeup of Parliament, the hardliners lost many of their seats in the 10 April 1992 Parliamentary elections. - *ed note*.

21. Within the context of Iranian domestic political life, conservative clerics are usually true believers on matters of Shia religious doctrine but are often willing to tolerate other opinions on social and economic issues. As a whole, they consider the Islamic Republic well entrenched and argue that the regime should routinize its political processes, abandon revolutionary excesses, address the country's shortcomings, and allow exiles to come home. In general, what tends to unite most conservatives is their opposition to Communist ideology, demands for a greater role for merchants in foreign trade, and their rejection of revolutionary excesses. For further details on political and ideological currents in Iran, consult Shahrugh Akhavi, "Elite Nationalism in the Islamic Republic of Iran," *Middle East Journal* 41, no. 2 (Spring 1987): 181-202; Shaul Bakhash, *The Reign of*

the Ayatollahs: Iran and the Islamic Revolution (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1984); and Nikola B. Schahgaldian, "Iran After Khomeyni," *Current History: A World Affairs Journal* 89, no. 344 (February 1990): 61-64, 82-84.

22. Such measures have recently come to include sweeping changes in the makeup of various governmental censorship boards active in the cultural, educational, and artistic fields. Indeed, as a rule, some of the more dogmatic Islamic fundamentalists have been replaced by officials who are younger, better educated, and at least by comparison with their predecessors, open-minded. For a Western reporting of such trends, see Philip Shenon's article in *New York Times*, 15 August 1990.

23. Some of the functions of the Council of Guardians were transferred late last year to a newly formed body named the Council for Determination of Exigencies. Even though seats in the new council were allocated to representatives of all factions, the conservative-centrist alliance gained a clear majority in it. President Rafsanjani, meanwhile, succeeded in becoming its chairman in November 1989, thus further consolidating his position.

24. The course of neutralizing hard-liners from influential state organs went into higher gear after spring 1990. In all processes, scores of positions within the ministries of Interior, Education, Health, and Medical Education, as well as in influential structures such as the radical-controlled "Office for Strengthening Unity," were filled mostly by close followers of Rafsanjani. See *Kayhan* (London), 21 April, 19 May, and 2 August 1990. See also Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *FBIS Near East and South Asia: Daily Report*, 18 May 1990.

25. Khomeini was the long-time head of the radical stronghold Mostazafin (the Oppressed) Foundation, which controls industries and land confiscated from their former owners. Until last year, he was in charge of the annual *hajj* pilgrimage to Mecca, and was responsible for riots there in July 1987 which left hundreds of Iranians dead. At present, Khomeini is effectively insulated from all major decision-making bodies.

26. On the changing fortunes of leftist forces in the post-revolutionary period, consult Nozar Alaolmolki, "The New Iranian Left," *Middle East Journal* 41, no. 2 (Spring 1987): 218-233; Aryeh Y. Yodaft, *The Soviet Union and Revolutionary Iran* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1984); Sephehr Zabih, *The Left in Contemporary Iran* (London: Croom Helms 1986); and Assef Bayat, *Workers and Revolution in Iran: A Third World Experience of Workers' Control* (London: Zed Books, Ltd., 1987).

27. However, more than 20 leaders of the Freedom Movement were arrested in June of this year and may stay in prison for a long time. They were accused of having contacts with foreign governments and media.

28. For a comprehensive study of this organization, consult Ervand Abrahamian, *The Iranian Mojahedin* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989).

29. An estimated one-half to one million more homeless refugees were added to this number in June 1990 when a devastating earthquake hit Iran's agriculturally rich northern province of Gilan. In addition to destroying hundreds of towns and villages, the deadly tremors took over 50,000 lives.

30. During his tenure as the Acting Commander-in-Chief, Rafsanjani apparently succeeded in merging the command structure of the regular army with the Revolutionary Guards to eliminate parallel and often conflicting chains-of-command

which seriously hampered military operations during the war with Iraq. For details, see *New York Times*, 3 September 1989.

31. For a detailed examination of the evolution, leadership, organization, and political beliefs of the Iranian armed forces in the post-1979 period, consult Nikola B. Schahgaldian, *The Iranian Military Under the Islamic Republic* (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, 1987).

32. The role and impact of social and economic factors in the Iranian revolutionary process are examined in Hassan Razavi and Firouz Vakili, *The Political Environment of Economic Planning in Iran, 1971-1983* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984); Robert Lonney, *Economic Origins of the Iranian Revolution* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1982); and Farhad Kazemi, *Poverty and Revolution in Iran* (New York: New York University Press, 1980).

33. See *Kayhan* (London), 22 September 1988.

34. For detailed casualty figures, see Hooshang Amirahmadi and Manoucher Parvin, eds., *Post-Revolutionary Iran* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988); and Eric Hooglund, "The Islamic Republic at War and Peace," *Middle East Report* 19, no. 156 (January-February 1989): 4-12.

35. To this list of human damage, one can also add 360,000 dissident Iraqi citizens and 2.3 million Afghan refugees who moved to Iran throughout the 1980s.

36. The bombing of Iranian oil refineries had forced the country, a major oil exporter, to import kerosene, aviation fuel, and other oil products since 1981, at an average of \$5 billion per year. For details, see *Iran Times*, 9 September 1988.

37. For detailed information on economic damage to factories, bridges, dams, power stations, railroads, and the like, see Amirahmadi and Parvin, 1988. The impact of the 1988 missile attacks is covered in *Iranian Times*, 1, 8, 12, 22, and 29 April 1988.

38. These figures are calculated from data appearing in Hooshang Amirahmadi, "Economic Reconstruction of Iran: Costing the War Damage," *Third World Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (January 1990): 29-31.

39. For details about Iran's uneven economic development in the post-1973 period, consult Mohsen Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988), especially 105-132; Homa Katouzian, *The Political Economy of Modern Iran: Despotism and Pseudo-Modernization, 1926-1979* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1981); Lonney, 1982; and Razavi and Vakili, 1984.

40. Iranian nationals who have since 1979 come to reside abroad, mostly in the United States and Western Europe, are variously estimated to number between 1.5 and 2.0 million.

41. The clerical regime's oil revenues dropped consistently from the peak of \$20 billion in 1983 to stand at \$13 billion by 1986. Since then it has fluctuated between \$8.2 and \$13.5 billion. See *Middle East Economic Digest*, 30 March 1990 and 8 September 1991.

42. *Iran Times*, 28 October and 19 December 1988.

43. See EIU, *Iran: Country Profile, 1988-1989*; also *Petroleum Economist*, February 1990 and July 1991.

44. The natural growth rate in 1990 reached 3.9 percent per year. See *Ettela'at* (Tehran daily in Persian), 16 March 1991.

45. Since the mid-1980s, Iranian authorities have been spending an average of over \$2 billion a year on food imports.

46. This question was first framed explicitly in the above manner by Rafsanjani at a Friday prayer speech in August 1988.

The text appeared in *Kayhan Havai*, 24 August 1988, 9.

47. At present, such views are regularly voiced in the main "opposition" newspaper *Resalat* and to some extent in the daily *Ettela'at* and *Tehran Times*; also see Chris Kutschera, "The New Entrepreneurs," *The Middle East*, March 1986, 7-9; and Amirahmadi and Parvin, 126-149.

48. Publications such as *Kayhan*, *Jomhuriye Eslami*, *Abrar*, *Jehad*, *Omide Enghelab*, *Sobhe Azadegan*, among others, tend to reflect most of these stands.

49. For a summary of Musavi's views on these issues, see Schahgaldian, 1989, 52-57; also *Kayhan Havai*, 19 October 1988, 11.

50. Khomeini's views on post-war reconstruction priorities were outlined in a communique he issued in the fall of 1988. For the text, see *Kayhan Havai*, 12 October 1988, 3. For his defense of unlimited powers of the clerical government in the social, political, and economic life of citizens, see *Kayhan Havai* (Tehran daily), 7 January 1988; also Shaul Bakhash, "Islam and Power Politics," *New York Review of Books*, 21 July 1988, 32.

51. These positions were formulated as early as in late 1988. See *Kayhan Havai*, issues of 24 September 1988, 9; 26 October 1988, 10; and 21 December 1988, 3.

52. For full details of the new Five Year Plan see *Iran Focus* (London) 3, Nos. 2-5 (February-May 1990), in addition to its Special Supplementary Issue, March 1990. Also see *Middle East Economic Survey*, 11 December 1989, and *Ayandegan*, 12-19 April 1991.

53. See *Middle East Economic Digest*, 30 March 1991, 14.

54. This assertion is based on a careful review of Iran's foreign transactions as reported regularly in the *Middle East Economic Digest*.

55. For details, see *Iran Times*, 6 April 1990.

56. About 800,000 barrels a day of refined oil were consumed domestically in Iran last year. See *Middle East Economic Digest*, 22 April 1991, 14.

57. Iran's gas reserves are second only to those of the Soviet Union. For coverage of the agreement, see *The Middle East*, January 1990, 22-25, 49.

58. For details of the agreement, finalized when Rafsanjani visited Moscow, see *Middle East Economic Digest*, 7 July 1989, 18; and *Iran Times*, 7 July 1989, 1. It is interesting to note that upon return from Moscow, Rafsanjani told his audience in Tehran that it was time for Iranians to bury the slogan "Death to the Soviet Union," which had been frequently chanted in public gatherings along with "Death to America." "With the level of relations we have now, it would be senseless to shout such a slogan," declared the future president. For excerpts of his speech delivered on 30 June, see *Iran Times*, 7 July 1989, 1 and 12.

59. See, for example, Y. Ibrahim, "Iran May Borrow at Banks to Revive Economy," *New York Times*, 3 February 1989; *Iran Times*, 15 June 1990; *Iran Focus* 2, no. 10 (November 1989), no. 11 (December 1989); and *Iran Focus* 3, no. 7 (July-August 1990).

60. See the article "Iranian Accord with Amoco Lifts a Barrier to US Trade," *New York Times*, 16 June 1990.

61. On the state of higher education in the post-revolutionary period, see Bakhash, 1984, especially chapters 5 and 10; Haleh Afshar, *Iran: A Revolution in Turmoil* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1985), 246-249; Ferhang Rajaei, "The Islamic Cultural Revolution and Postrevolutionary Iranian Society," in *Internal Developments in Iran*, ed. Shireen T. Hunter, Significant Issues Series 7, no. 3 (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University

Press, 1985), 36-57; Khosrow Sabhe, "Education in Revolution: Is Iran Duplicating the Chinese Cultural Revolution?" *Comparative Education* 10, no. 3 (1982): 271-280; also *Kayhan Havai*, 25 January 1989, 13.

62. For details of such efforts, see *Iran Focus* 1, no. 3 (December 1988): 12-13. Also *Kayhan Havai*, 3 August 1988 and 16 November 1991.

63. This process has already begun with the signing of contracts with various firms from West Germany, France, Japan, Italy, the USSR, Brazil, and many others; as of mid-1990, there were already a few thousand nationals from these countries working on different industrial projects in Iran. See *Ettela'at*, 16 May 1990, 5-6; and *Resalat*, 28 March 1990, 3.

64. Examples of this struggle include the long-standing competition and rivalry between the following organs: Ministry of Housing vs. Housing Crusade; Ministries of Agriculture and Plan and Budget Organization (reconstituted as a new ministry in 1987) vs. Reconstruction Crusade (again turned into a separate ministry in 1987); Foundation of the Oppressed and Shahid (Martyrs) Foundation vs. Ministries of Commerce and Light Industry; Literacy Movement Organization vs. Ministry of Education and Training; Supreme Council for Educational Revolution vs. Ministry of Higher Education; Gendarmerie vs. Tribal Basij; the regular professional military, especially Ground Forces, vs. the IRGC; Ministry of Trade vs. Supreme Council of Trade; Revolutionary Committees vs. National Police; Supreme Cultural Revolution Council vs. State University System; Ministry of Interior vs. Ministry of Information and Intelligence; and so on.

65. For coverage of the latest moves by the government in this direction, see *Kayhan* (London), no. 389, 30 January 1992.

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